




ELENI & CHRISTINA LETSIOU

OINOFILIA
Wine trade

GREECE

OINOPHILIA is a family affair created by two sisters as the right ground to combine their professional and personal lives and their new role as mothers. One with a degree in Environmental Sciences and the other an Oenologist, they were thinking of ways to combine the wine tradition of Greece with modern eco-friendly practices. Especially the reuse of the glass bottles they have in their stores is a result of the Zero Waste philosophy. With an anti-snob attitude and the certainty that a good wine does not have to be expensive, they reintroduce wine into everyday life as an integral element of Mediterranean culture.



CHARALAMPIA A. OLYMPIOU

Education,
Private Institute

CYPRUS

Charalampia has a bachelor's degree in History & Archaeology, a MA in Byzantine Studies and she is also a Ph.D. student in Byzantine Archaeology. In 2018 she decided to start her own business in education. She applied for funding in the category of new entrepreneurs, which was approved. This grant was significant for her, as she had no other financial resources. However, the beginning was challenging, because no one knew and trusted her and she also faced difficulties during the covid-19 pandemic period. But she highlights the importance of hard work and persistence, and that people should never give up and follow their dreams.

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ANGELICA ROSS

TransTech - Social
Enterprise

USA

Born in 1980 in Wisconsin, USA, Angelica is an African-American transgender woman, actress, self-taught computer programmer, and transgender rights advocate. As the founder and CEO of TransTech Social Enterprises, she empowers and supports transgender individuals in the tech industry. After leaving university, and serving in the US army where she faced sexism and homophobia, she pursued self-taught coding and established a web development business. In 2014, she launched TransTech, creating opportunities for transgender people in technology. Ross's diverse journey includes a diploma in Cosmetology, Hair & Makeup, acting classes, and a significant impact on transgender inclusion and empowerment in the tech sector.



EIRINI BOUNTOUKI

MODEL

GREECE

Since 2006 she has worked as a model, both in Greece and abroad. Belonging to the plus-size category, she has the honor of being the first international plus-size model in Greece. Collaborations with famous brands, Greek designers, runways, magazine shootings, and interviews, are the main part of her profession. Especially in a field where there was no room for a model like her, she says that she always brought her own chair to the table. The most important thing is the empowerment that is offered to people who identify with a distinctive model type feeling integrated and visible.

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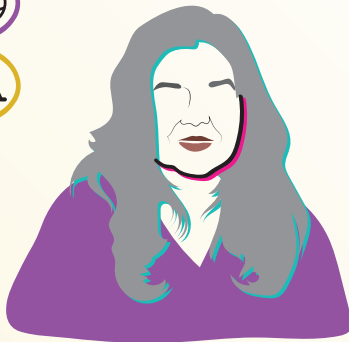


LINA KLEMKAITE

Dramblys - Non profit organisation

Spain / Country of origin Lithuania

Originally from Lithuania, Lina embarked on her journey in Spain pursuing a doctorate in Bilbao. Her story took a turn when she co-founded Dramblys in Albacete, an association dedicated to fostering social innovation both locally and across Europe. Dramblys embraces a European perspective in its projects and collaborations, influenced by Lina's extensive experience as an EU and International projects manager and researcher. Lina is passionate about amplifying under-represented voices, empowering marginalized communities, and fostering social creativity ventures for sustainable local development and global solidarity.



SANGITA DESAI

Raw Nature Company - Botanical grooming solutions for men & Fashion Designer

INDIA

Sagita Desai was born in Bangalore, India. She was born with Symbrachydactyly, a condition where fingers of one hand are missing or misshaped since birth. Her fondness for fashion led her to study at the American College of London in 1989 and since then she has been a successful fashion designer for 25 years, overcoming barriers and turning obstacles into success. When her studio was destroyed during the Mumbai floods in 2006, she engaged in her father's essential oil business. She then co-founded Raw Nature Company, which makes her the first Indian entrepreneur to start a successful grooming business for men.

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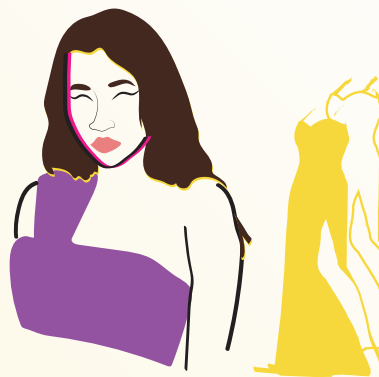


PAVLINA PLATONOS

**Nature Me - Olive oil
soaps and cosmetics**

CYPRUS

Her architectural studies, along with a transformative master's program in China, awakened her to the delicate connection between people's actions and the environment. Realizing the global impact of pollution, she began making small but significant changes in her life to preserve our planet and safeguard it for future generations. She crafts eco-friendly cosmetics and soaps using local olive oil, devoid of toxic ingredients and plastic waste. Her commitment extends to gardening, where she cultivates plant sponges and shares traditional seeds like sunflowers and water pumpkins. In the heart of Lympia village, she operates a stone house workplace, championing a sustainable, eco-conscious way of life.



NICOLE CHERRY

YLLA - Clothing Brand

**ROMANIA /
ROMA ORIGINS**

Nicole Cherry is a former Romanian pop singer. She has a decade in the music industry and she gained success in 2013 with her single "Memories" which was released when she was only 14 years old. When the pandemic halted her music career, Nicole seized the opportunity to explore her passion for fashion, giving rise to the YLLA brand. The brand was founded with the vision of creating timeless pieces that empower women to feel confident and beautiful in their own skin. Despite the challenges, she reflects on her journey with gratitude, citing her success as confirmation of her path.

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ASPASIA GIAKOUMAKI
Magiri - Pasta production
GREECE

She began her business in 2013 in a small space with small production, handling sales while her son managed production. Through local festivals and exhibitions in Crete, she connected with consumers and expanded her wholesale customer base. With her daughter overseeing administration and online sales, they ventured beyond Crete and later beyond Greece. After five years, they established a larger facility with advanced machinery, boosting production. Today, their products are well-known among their target audience, thanks to their hard work.

FLORENTIA FOURLI
Hypercliq - IT
GREECE

A computer scientist, specialising in artificial intelligence, with over 20 years of experience in the field. Her professional journey started with her studies in the United Kingdom and Scotland which was then followed by several years of employment in the research field. Innovation is her passion and in 2011 she founded Hypercliq, where she is still CEO. She has led pioneering projects in Industry, Construction, Healthcare and Sustainable Design and through Hypercliq, she has participated as a researcher in European Commission research and innovation projects, alongside engaging in startup and pitching events. In 2023 she was selected for the "Best EU-backed Female-led Innovations Pitching Event".

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GEORGIA ZILOU

Ena karo - Soap production

GREECE

She left her hometown Athens and her previous professional occupation and went to an island of the Cyclades, Tinos. There she created a laboratory for the manufacture of body products, from organic materials, with a focus on good quality and natural raw materials. Currently, except for her, there is another woman working in the laboratory and they are in perfect collaboration. Many serious challenges have arisen along the way, but with female perseverance and flexibility they managed to have an improving tendency.

PAVLINA KONSTANTARA

SOCIALDOO - Communication Solutions / E-Commerce

GREECE

Her diverse journey spans media, from TEFA graduate to Director at the Lycurgos Stavrakos School of Directing. After a master's at Emerson University, she was involved in directing sports and hosted music broadcasts. From her role at Olympicas Media Room Manage to Parliament as a scientific assistant, her path led to 15 years in marketing and communication. She holds a Life Coaching Degree from the University of Athens. In 2017, she launched faepaidimou.gr, and in 2020, mydayoff.gr. Author of three books and a mentor, she champion authenticity. Since March 2022 she is a part of "Holocracy" of the strategic communication company "SOCIALDOO", imprinting their mark with a dynamic team.

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ELISAVET-EIRINI MICHAILIDOU

Elismadeit - Handmade
personal care
products

GREECE

A mother of 3 children, she lives in a village in North Greece. She has embraced environmental harmony through circular and local economy principles, and zero waste practices. As a self-taught seamstress, she began crafting reusable cloth pads and other items in 2016, using eco-friendly materials. Each "Elismadeit" pad is handmade with care and quality materials while she offers a variety of fabric sanitary pads with unique designs to cater to every woman's needs. Her goal is to promote a positive relationship with menstruation for women of all ages. Additionally, she hosts "Menstrual Flow-Nature-You" workshops, participates in eco-friendly discussions, and advocates for zero waste living in personal and professional life.



FOTEINI PANTZIA

Wine bar/restaurant

GREECE

With two children, three dogs, and seven cats, she lives and operates three dining establishments in the centre of Athens. Her journey began in sales and the wine industry; she gained experience at various well known wineries and held a directorial role at HORECA, embarking on numerous wine and culinary expeditions. At 46, she made a pivotal decision, founding "By the Glass". Today, she owns two wine bistros along with an all-day Italian eatery. Balancing her roles as a businesswoman and single parent, she's also deeply committed to addressing the issue of stray animals in the capital and their care.

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IOANNA-MARIA GKERTSOU

Lara - Guide dog school
for blind people

GREECE

She is a psychologist and President of the School of Guide Dogs for the Blind "Lara". She lost her eyesight in the incubator where she was placed because she was born prematurely. She founded the first guide dog school in Greece and the only one founded by a blind person. She named the school after her first dog and through it, she has helped many people who are blind to live a social life as they wish. The challenge that the school faces: raising funds without government or EU support. They rely on private donations, aiming for stable backers to expand their guide dog services for the visually impaired and grow their organisation.



STELLA KASDAGLI

Women on Top
NGO

GREECE

She finished French Literature in Athens and got a Master's degree in Media from the University of East London. She is a writer, translator and founder of Women On Top, a non-profit organisation for women's professional empowerment and equality at work. As co-founder of Women On Top, she designs and implements programmes that support women to achieve their professional and creative goals, and contribute to the gradual transformation of the social, political, economic and working environment that surrounds them - always aiming for equality and empowerment.

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XENIA VANIKIOTI

Ode to Socks - Clothing
and Accessory
Trade

GREECE

She studied Agriculture and Fashion Styling but neither of them really won her over. Her passion for socks triumphed over conventional career choices. Despite scepticism about the Greek market, she founded Ode to Socks where she met with success from the very first days. Ode to Socks is a successful venture offering high-quality cotton socks featuring Greek folklore-inspired designs and socially conscious messages. The brand has expanded into clothing and accessories, creating a distinctive image. Sustainability is a key focus, with upcycling initiatives and a commitment to reducing the environmental footprint in production.



VALERIE BADILLA

LEARN - Education
Management and
Marketing

Cyprus /
Country of
origin Philippines

Building on her background in Competency-based Curriculum Design and Training, she founded LEARN, an education company, in Myanmar in 2014. The LEARN Competency-based Institute offers specialized professional development and technical-vocational courses. With a prestigious clientele, including the IFC–World Bank Group, DFID-UK, and Manchester Metropolitan University, Ooredoo, Puma Energy Services etc LEARN has made a significant impact. In 2019, she founded ASK Tech International, a Telecom engineering and training company in the Philippines. Impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns and the Coup in Myanmar, she now resides in Cyprus, poised to continue her entrepreneurial journey. Her rich international experience across various countries informs her teaching and training approach, enriching her work.

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VALENTINA PAULA SMITH

Foundation Children
in Difficulty

ROMANIA

In 1997, she graduated with a social work degree from the University of Bucharest, later obtaining an MBA with Merit from the University of Sheffield in 2016. Valentina's journey with Children in Difficulty (CID) Romania began in 1999, initially focusing on projects for vulnerable children (children living on the streets, palliative care, and autistic children). By 2001, she became the Director of Hospice Sf Margareta Bucharest. Her dedication propelled her to the role of CID Romania's Executive Director in 2007, and in 2020, she assumed the presidency. Valentina's unwavering commitment and civic engagement have transformed adversity into positive change, leaving a lasting impact on the community.



ALETTA JACOBS

Medicine

NETHERLANDS

The first woman officially to attend a Dutch university, she became one of the first female physicians in the Netherlands. In 1882, she founded the world's first birth control clinic and was a leader in both the Dutch and international women's movements. She led campaigns aimed at deregulating prostitution, improving women's working conditions, promoting peace and calling for women's right to vote.

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Seasoned entrepreneur in the finance and technology sectors, Christina has launched and scaled businesses across New York, London and Amsterdam. Her expertise is sought by corporate, government and academic institutions around themes of entrepreneurship, digitisation, implications of AI-based systems and the economics of “giving back”. Christina supports underrepresented founders around the globe through angel investments and network introductions, as well as through her Advisory Board positions on impact accelerator programs. As she says she only invest her money, time and advice in startups with a diverse management team.

CHRISTINA CALJÉ

**Start-up founder
and investor**

**Netherlands /
Countries of origin USA,
Puerto Rico, Suriname**



Her skillful communication has taken her through diverse professional ventures, becoming the main radio host and director of esRadio in Albacete. In 2001 her passion for public speaking and communications became her profession, and has since then presented a wide variety of events and collaborated with local and national businesses, ranging from Charity and NGOs to Fashion and Cultural congresses. Today she is the head of the AMEPAP annual gala and actively supports the planning and execution of business and institutional events in Albacete. In 2020 she earned the “Honourable Recognition in Culture and Media”, Women’s Day Town Award.

MARÍA GARCÍA MORCILLO

**Radio Host and
Communications
Director**

SPAIN

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SANDRA ESPARCIA GOMEZ

Online Traductores -
Translation
agency

SPAIN

Sandra studied Translation and Interpreting in Alicante and then got a Master's degree in International Business. She started to work in an export department and began travelling around the world to sell decorative paints. Encouraged by her partner, she decided to start her own translation agency called Online Traductores, where she now manages a team of more than 500 translators, translating into all languages for multinational companies all over the world. In 2018, she joined the board of directors of the local Association of Young Entrepreneurs to help young entrepreneurs and encourage entrepreneurship in her city. Nowadays, she serves as the vice-president of this association.



YVONNE BAJELA

Impact X Capital LLP -
Venture Capital
Fund

UK

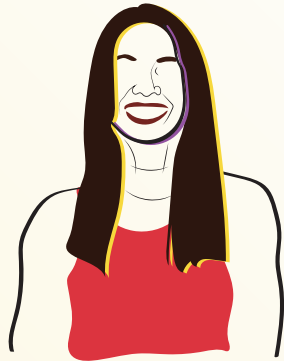
Yvonne Bajela is a Black British female entrepreneur and an advocate for increasing diversity in entrepreneurship and leadership positions. She is a founding member and principal at Impact X Capital LLP, a UK-based venture capital fund created to invest in companies led by underrepresented entrepreneurs, especially in support of female and Black funders. Before becoming a venture capital investor, Bajela worked in several countries abroad as an investment advisor and served as the youngest investment manager at Mitsui&Co. In 2020, she was listed on Forbes magazine's '30 Under 30' Europe Finance List, while also securing a position on Forbes' 25 Leading Black British People.

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MELANIE PERKINS

Canva - Design
Software

AUSTRALIA

Born in 1987 in Perth, Australia, Melanie is an Australian tech entrepreneur, CEO, and co-founder of Canva, a design software platform. Of mixed Australian and Filipino-Sri Lankan descent, Perkins started her entrepreneurial journey at 14, selling handmade scarves. After studying communications, psychology, and commerce at the University of Western Australia, she dropped out at 19 to launch her first business, Fusion Books. But then in 2011, Perkins conceived Canva, a user-friendly graphic design tool, and materialised it in 2013 with her partner. Despite initial rejections, Canva thrived, making Perkins a billionaire, illustrating her resilience and innovation in the tech industry.



ERIKA RAMIREZ-OLIVARES

Erika's Beauty
Salon

USA /
Country of
Origin Mexico

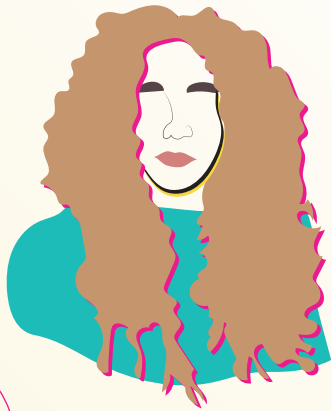
Erika is a trans Mexican-American female entrepreneur in her 30s. She is the owner of a beauty/hair salon named after herself in Boyle Heights, Los Angeles. She immigrated to the USA by herself from Aguas Calientes, Mexico, in the early 2000s, in search of a better life and opportunities. Erika studied cosmetology and worked at another beauty salon for 3 years. Passionate about her job, by the age of 23 she launched her own successful beauty business and experienced rapid economic growth. Erika's Beauty Salon has become a heaven for other Latinx trans women seeking safety and stability.

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ELENI ANTONIOU

**Georgie's Mummy Blog/
Mamma Mu
podcast**

**Cyprus
/ Country
of Origin UK**

Eleni Antoniou, a Cypriot writer, blogger, and podcaster, transitioned into her online journey after leaving her journalism career to become a mother in 2011. Born in the UK but living in Cyprus, her online presence evolved, connecting her with fellow mothers and women through her blog and social media platforms. In 2019, her podcast, "Mamma Mu," began as a casual hobby recorded in her car. Now, with her dedicated recording studio, "Mamma Mu" has risen to become the top podcast for women and mothers in Cyprus.



ELENI KOSTI

**KENO - Publishing House
/ Bookshop**

**Cyprus /
Country of Origin Greece**

Eleni, disappointed with the old-school business models practised by local publishing houses, had a lightbulb moment. She saw the potential in building lively, communal creative spaces that could be a game-changer for herself and other local artists. So, she teamed up with a like-minded friend who shared her passion and beliefs and together, they birthed KENO Publications, a fresh take on the artistic scene, where their energy and creativity could truly thrive.

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ROXANA DAMASCHIN-TECU

OilRight - Social Enterprise

ROMANIA

Her entrepreneurial journey began in 2001, as the Social Enterprise & Supported Employment Coordinator at Pentru Voi, working for 7 years supporting social businesses. In 2008, she joined NESsT an organisation that develops sustainable social enterprises as the Enterprise Development Manager for Romania and later on as a Regional Director CEE & Portfolio Director, leading the development of social enterprises in emerging markets. In 2019, she co-founded UnLoc, providing community-based support for adults with disabilities. In 2020, she co-founded OilRight SRL, a venture that turns used cooking oil into scented candles while employing individuals with disabilities. Her journey reflects her commitment to sustainable solutions for social issues and inclusivity.



SANJA STANIMIROVIĆ

TESTERAL D.O.O

SERBIA

Sanja Stanimirović, with 15+ years in construction, is an expert in architectural aluminium and steel solutions, specialising in facades, windows, and doors being responsible for end-to-end operations. Additionally, she holds leadership roles as Vice President of Manufacturers of Doors, Windows, and Glass Facades, and Vice President of Entrepreneurs in Šumadija and Pomoravlje regions at Privredna komora Srbije | Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia. Armed with a Master's in Finance from the University of Sheffield, she possesses strong analytical, strategic, and business planning skills, dedicated to creating value for clients, the company, and the community.

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TYLENE WOOD

The Yoga Tree - Yoga lessons & organic products

Cyprus / USA with mixed roots from Mexico & Germany

Tylene Wood was born in Arizona, USA with Mexican and German heritage. In 2019, she became a yoga instructor, later moving to Cyprus where she combined her yoga practice with her husband's family restaurant and event space in a rural village. In 2022, she reconnected with her Mexican roots, sourcing high-quality organic Cacao from relatives and launched "The Yoga Tree" online shop, promoting a mindful lifestyle. Collaborating with family, she offers organic garden products, hand-made yoga props, and ceremonial grade cacao. Tylene has also shared her yoga expertise at festivals and conducted cacao ceremonies for up to 100 participants.

DESPINA KYRIACOU

The Platform 9 3/4 - Barber Shop

CYPRUS

Despina Kyriacou is an unconventional LGBTQ+ entrepreneur from Cyprus, one of the very few female barbers in Cyprus who runs her own barber shop. Despite her graphic design background, Despina eventually embraced the family legacy which has a longstanding tradition in the hairdressing industry. Initially, she opened a hairdressing salon, but then opened her own barber shop, as most of her clients were men. In her shop, she welcomes both male and female clients, styling their hair based on their personality, regardless of gender. Despina's motto is "Hair has no gender" and encourages more women to get into barbering.

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YENA HACIŞEVKI

Atelier Kabuk - Handmade Products (Board games & Flutes)

CYPRUS

Yena Hacışevki, a Turkish-Cypriot entrepreneur and LGBTQ+ advocate, was born in Cyprus in 1985. With a degree in Classical Archaeology from Turkey and restoration experience in Italy, she returned to Cyprus and worked as a professional tour guide. Since 2016, she's been the owner of "Atelier Kabuk" in North Nicosia. Here, she crafts unique flutes that allow two people to play simultaneously. In 2017, she designed a 48-metre-long flute played by 190 people at the Nicosia buffer zone. Yena is also involved in board game design and conducts workshops, showcasing her creativity and entrepreneurial spirit.

ALEXANDRA HELICAR

Small Fabrications - Sewing Studio for lessons and gifts

Cyprus / Country of Origin Germany

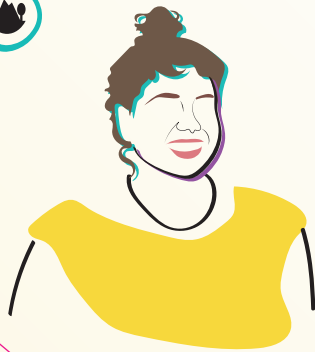
This business started with Alexandra giving sewing lessons to her friends in 2013, just after she had her fourth child. The number of classes steadily grew to 15 classes per week, making it necessary to rent new premises in the village. Four years ago she also started to teach sewing to children and teenagers meanwhile she also began to produce items for sale together with a Cypriot friend. Using pieces of old fabrics and combining tradition with new techniques, at the beginning of 2023, she was in the fortunate position to open her own shop and workshop in a newly renovated space within her own house.

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ELSIE HADJIPAVLI

Herbal skincare

CYPRUS

Her entrepreneurial journey sprouted from a deep-rooted love for herbs, plants, and a profound connection to nature. What began as a personal passion project soon bloomed into a business, sparked by requests from friends and acquaintances. Driven to expand her knowledge, she delved into aromatherapy, botany, and skincare formulation courses. Her journey transitioned from her home kitchen to a renovated old restaurant, thanks to her supportive parents who shared her passion. She built her business on ethical and sustainable principles, sourcing raw materials from organic farms. This journey, characterised by slow, organic growth, reflects her unceasing quest for knowledge, creativity, and a harmonious relationship with the Earth.



KATERINA ATHIENITOU

APOCHROSIS - Products
& Services for
Museums

CYPRUS

Katerina is a woman entrepreneur, founder of the APOCHROSIS workshop, and single mother of two children. She has studied the conservation of antiquities & artefacts, and she recently finished her master's in business administration (MBA). APOCHROSIS company provides products and services for museums and cultural organisations and institutions. Her cooperation with the Cyprus Handicraft Center and the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus gives her the opportunity to show people what she loves to create. APOCHROSIS products are original replicas and artefacts inspired by Cyprus culture, archaeology, and heritage. The company mainly operates business-to-business, but it also manufactures exclusively custom-made corporate gifts.

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ANDREEA IAGER TAKO

AMBASADA - Social
Enterprise

ROMANIA

Andreea, the founder of ONE.shirt, has introduced a sustainable and circular economy concept, ONE.shirt.ONE.story, reshaping the garment industry with a focus on ethical and sustainable practices. She co-founded building.a.community to support local businesses through reconditioned shipping container spaces in response to the global pandemic. As a co-founder of FABER.community, she revived an industrial heritage site into a hub for local creatives. Andreea also manages AMBASADA, a cultural and concept space promoting collaboration and community impact. Her journey includes roles like executive search consultant, events business manager, co-marketing responsible, and project manager, showcasing her diverse entrepreneurial and organisational expertise.



NADIA COMĂNECI

Bart Conner - Gymnastics
Academy

ROMANIA

Nadia Comăneci, a legendary gymnast, made history with five Olympic gold medals and numerous titles, including the 1975 European Women's Artistic Gymnastics Championship. At just 14, she astounded the world with the first perfect 10 at the Olympics, winning three golds and more. She continued her success in Russia, securing two more golds and silver medals. Even in retirement, Comăneci's achievements continued, coaching for Romania and becoming an entrepreneur with ventures like the Bart Conner Gymnastics Academy, Perfect 10 Production Company, and sports equipment shops. She and her husband also edit International Gymnast Magazine, adding another chapter to her remarkable journey.

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JADRANKA JEVTOVIĆ

Artos d.o.o.
- Bakery

SERBIA

Jadranka Jevtović, the owner and director of the "Artos" bakery, invested her capital to renovate the existing facility, acquire new equipment, and deliver vehicles. The bakery has a daily production capacity of 8,000 units, producing bread, fresh pastries, cakes, and frozen puff pastry. The motivation to do so came from her husband, as well as her family. In 2022, Jadranka Jevtović triumphed as the winner of the "Flower of Success for Women Dragons" award in the category for local market development.



DRAGANA ALEKSIĆ

Vinarija Aleksic
- Winery

SERBIA

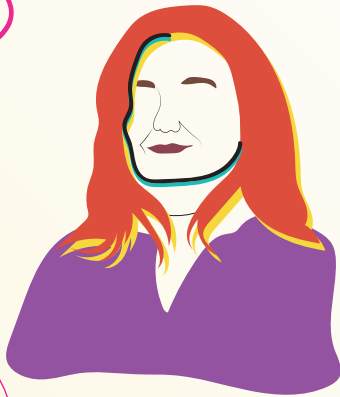
Dragana, along with her sisters (Maja, and Marija), founded "Vinarija Aleksić" in 2006 in Vranje and they reinvigorated the art of winemaking in southern Serbia. Leasing 70 hectares for vineyards marked a milestone, granting them control over the entire winemaking process. This initiative not only expanded production but also elevated competitiveness nationally and internationally. Dragana, Maja, and Marija epitomise a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity, subtlety and intensity, aesthetics and harmony in crafting exceptional wines.

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CRISTINA POTRA MUREȘAN

FABER - Cultural
Center

ROMANIA

Cristina Potra Mureșan is the initiator and project manager of Timotion, and founding member of the Timișoara Community Foundation. She is also a co-founder of FABER, an independent cultural centre, founded by a group of entrepreneurs from Timisoara in the fields of architecture, IT and social-cultural. Trained as a financial auditor in Ireland, for 6 years business analyst and product owner in a software company, she is fascinated by diversity and stimulated by debates. She seeks to create, for herself and others, contexts where minds meet, and hearts resonate.



NIKKIE DE JAGER

Nimya - Beauty
industry

NETHERLANDS

Nikkie de Jager or NikkieTutorials is a Dutch makeup artist and beauty YouTuber. She soared to online stardom in 2015 with her viral video "The Power of Makeup," sparking a trend of people showcasing their faces with and without makeup. Currently boasting 14 million subscribers and 1.5 billion views on her YouTube channel as of October 2022, Nikkie is a force in the beauty community. Nikkie came out as a transgender woman in 2020. Adding to her achievements, she expanded her influence by launching her cosmetic brand, Nimya, in 2021.

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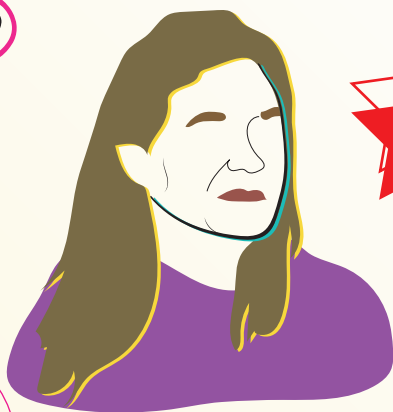


ZIZI FERNANDES

**Mama Taxi -
Taxi service**

**Netherlands
/ Country of origin
Guinea Bissau**

Zizi Fernandes introduced a unique concept: eco-friendly business rides with only women drivers behind the wheel, cruising in electric Teslas in Rotterdam. The idea sparked during Zizi's participation in "The Best Idea of South Africa," and now, it's gaining momentum. This isn't just about transportation; it's about celebrating diversity, reflecting Rotterdam's vibrant spirit, and giving women a powerful platform. The pandemic hit them hard, almost like a restart. People left, there has been a loss of turnover, as everything came to a standstill. But despite difficulties Mama Taxi was recently included in the collection of Echt Rotterdams Erfgoed (Real Rotterdam Heritage project).



CHARLENE DE CARVALHO-HEINEKEN

**Heineken - Brewing
company**

**England /
Country of origin
Netherlands**

Charlene is a Dutch-English businesswoman. Daughter of industrialist Freddy Heineken and a co-owner of the world's second-largest brewing company, Heineken International. Heineken is hard working, determined, and disciplined and these qualities make her one of the top businesswomen across the globe while she is also the richest person in the Netherlands, according to the Forbes billionaires list. Along with being an ambitious businesswoman, she is also a family-oriented lady who is deeply committed to her husband and five children.

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MARION MULDER

Multimedia -
Digital & tech

NETHERLANDS

Marion is one of the co-founders of Workplace Pride. For the last 16 years she's been an advocate of LGBTIQ+ women at work. Marion has been at the forefront of shaping LGBTQIA+ culture, building the community in the Netherlands, and creating awareness. As well as being pro-active in creating change and acceptance in society, she dedicates her strong expertise in the Digital & Tech field to mitigate bias from technology & enable gender free digital solutions.



LETHABO MOTSOLEDI

Voyc -
AI software

Netherlands
/ Country of origin
South Africa

Meet Lethabo Motsoaledi, the dynamic CEO and Co-Founder of Voyc, a game-changing AI software transforming call centre quality assurance. A Geomatics engineering graduate, Lethabo wears many hats – not only an academic with numerous fellowships but also a celebrated figure among South Africa's and the Netherlands' tech trailblazers. Also honoured as one of SA's first Inspiring Fifty, she's making waves in the world of technology and was included in the Forbes list "30 under 30".

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IFFAT ROSE GILL

Code to Change - Digital strategist

**Netherlands /
Country of origin Pakistan**

Iffat Rose Gill is an award-winning social innovator, digital strategist, and global leader for the digital inclusion of women. She has extensive experience in setting up programs and initiatives for the economic empowerment of women through digital inclusion via public-private partnerships to address the shortage of skilled labour and the gender digital divide. Her work has been recognized by Startup Amsterdam (Amsterdam City Council) as one of the top 10 diversity initiatives in the Netherlands. Silicon canals magazine has named her one of the successful female solopreneurs to watch in 2022.



HELEEN DURA - VAN OORD

**DQ&A MEDIA GROUP
& Peak Capital**

NETHERLANDS

Heleen founded DQ&A Media Group. She is also co-founder and partner at investment company Peak Capital and Future Food Fund. Her passion for media, became clear for Heleen when she chose her HBO studies at InHolland University of Applied Sciences. She was involved in the foundation of the Leading Online Entrepreneur of the Year Awards (LOEY) and Online Tuesday, the event for the online industry in the Netherlands. She was business woman of the year in 2013. Heleen is also a member of the jury for the Accenture Innovations Awards and a board member of the Jong Ondernemen foundation.

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ELLEN JANSEN

**Cheappower4U -
Energy sector**

NETHERLANDS

Ellen is a successful entrepreneur who has had an eventful journey. As a transgender, as an entrepreneur, but above all as a human being. Ellen is successful with her company Cheappower4U in the field of energy transitions in residential construction. As a coach and speaker, she also helps people, teams and organisations with desired transformations towards developing effective leadership. She emphasises that your personal growth is connected with the growth of the place you work. She is also an ambassador for social initiatives.

FABIOLA RUIZ

**Entrepreneurship trainer
& Cooperation and
development project
coordinator**

**Spain
/ Country of
origin Mexico**

Driven by the pursuit of academic evolution, Fabiola made a significant move from Mexico to Spain to pursue a doctorate in Criminology and Juvenile Justice. She quickly ascended within the university ranks and became a part of a nationally relevant tech project. Leveraging her expertise in Family Law, she delved into the third sector, spearheading projects for diverse businesses and high-impact corporations, ultimately creating over 1500 job opportunities. Moreover she established the country's first business incubator dedicated to social impact ventures and ventured into tech entrepreneurship with EliteHobby among other endeavours.

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BOUTAINA EL HADRI

Jovensolidés - Non profit association

Spain / Country of origin Morocco

Boutaina came to Valencia's La Coma Residential College, for her chemistry doctorate, where she engaged in social work with Jovesólides, an association born out of the same college. Beginning as a member, she later served on the board of directors she has been the organisation's manager since 2011. Thanks to and through Jovesólides, Boutaina has promoted various social initiatives, including the social innovation forum and the Citizenship School, a pioneering initiative in Spain that encourages the participation of migrants in the political area. She always try to find ways of contribution to ensure that social justice is not a utopia.



ANNA LUBSKA

Coach & Psychotherapist

Spain / Country of origin Poland

Anna Lubska, a Polish sociologist and psychologist, initially came to Spain for a European Voluntary Service (EVS) project. Impressed by the country, she decided to establish her private coaching and psychotherapy practice. Anna is actively involved in the corporate sector, delivering workshops and training to enhance workplace skills. Since 2013, she has been guiding individuals through psychotherapy, coaching, systemic constellations, courses, and group workshops. Her focus is on processes that facilitate reconnecting with oneself, emotions, and inner resources, fostering a sense of belonging to oneself and the community.

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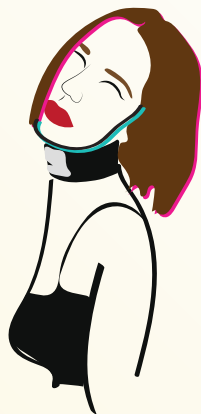


ESTHER RUIZ MOYA

Journalist
Writer

SPAIN

A journalist and law graduate, she dedicated the early stages of her career to private media and communications for more than 20 years. Taking the pandemic as an opportunity to discover herself as a writer, she published her first book "Cuando esto pasa..." (When this happens...), awarded the Red Circle Award, as Best book of the year in Motivation and Personal Growth. This marked a turning point in her life, undertaking her own professional project as a communicator, trainer and consultant in Spain and the United States. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Radio and Television Professional Association and was awarded the Golden Antenna award in 2022.



LOLA MUÑOZ

Lola Muñoz -
Fashion designing
brand

SPAIN

Born and raised in Albacete, Lola Muñoz is an attorney turned to a fashion entrepreneur. Since a very young age she showed great interest in fashion, but it wasn't until 2012 when decided to take the plunge and become the founder of her very own and unique fashion boutique, featuring renowned Spanish designers like The 2nd Skin Co. Her career has taken her through fascinating paths, launching her own label in 2016 and ultimately becoming the organiser of the Albacete Fashion Day Runway Show, celebrated annually in the heart of her hometown.

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TOÑI PASTRANA

**Mas Imagen - Events,
Marketing and
Communications**

SPAIN

Toñi Pastrana holds an extensive track record in the business environment, which she started by getting in-depth knowledge as an expert in protocol, media communications and human resources. She has not only started her own business "Mas Imagen - Events, Marketing and Communications", but is also the President of the Women's Entrepreneur Association in Albacete, one of the biggest business associations in Spain, leading a network of more than 400 women entrepreneur that work, collaborate and learn together. She was awarded the Medal of Regional Merits in 2019 for her accomplishments in the equality and business areas.



SONJA BERNHARDT

**ThoughtWare -
ICT industry**

**Australia
/ Country of
origin Germany**

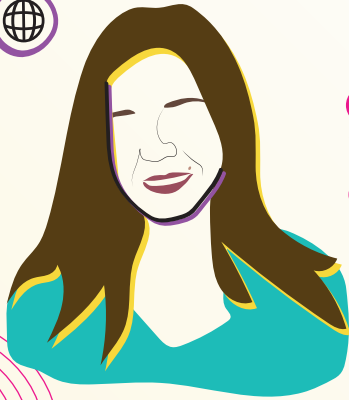
Born in Tasmania, Australia, Sonja Bernhardt, the daughter of a German immigrant, is one of the highest-profiled women in the Australian IT industry. She also identifies as a university dropout and a single parent. Sonja's remarkable achievements include being the first Australian inducted into the Women in Technology International Hall of Fame in 2005 and receiving a Medal of the Order of Australia for her contributions to the IT industry in 2011. Passionate about supporting women in IT, she founded WiT in Queensland and co-founded AWISE, addressing the under-representation of women in technology on a national scale.

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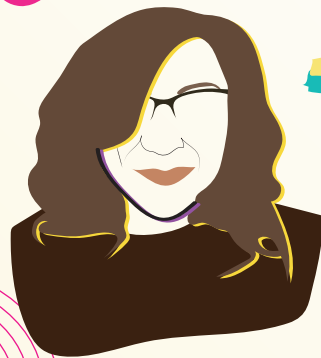


ANNA ZELNO

Academy for Diversity & Innovation

Spain / Country of origin Poland

Born in Poland, Anna Zelno began her entrepreneurial journey young, selling items with scouts and tutoring in school and university. She continued to explore business ventures while studying in different countries like Germany, Spain and Poland. In 2010, she joined intercultures as Business Partner for Spain, pioneering intercultural training. Guided by business partners, consultants, and networks, she returned to Poland in 2015, offering consulting and co-founding a coworking space. Three years later she returned to Spain as a freelancer before founding a company serving global multinationals. During the pandemic, she started a business specialising in educational services for consultants in diversity, equity, and inclusion.



LUCIA FERNANDEZ

Cherry Tours - Tourist Operator

SPAIN

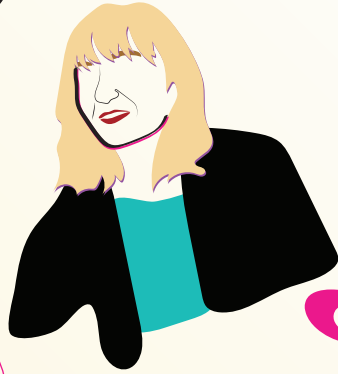
After years of travelling and working in the tourism industry of Scandinavian countries, Lucia came back to her hometown, Alcaraz, and started using her abilities to provide services missing in Alcaraz focused in education and later tourism. She is the founder of Cherry Tours, a tourist operator that offers guided visits of the cultural and natural heritage of Alcaraz. In addition, in the last years Lucia was granted funds from the regional government to start a training program for the region's unemployed. The training program has yielded very successful results consisting in the employment of 90% of its participants for two consecutive years.

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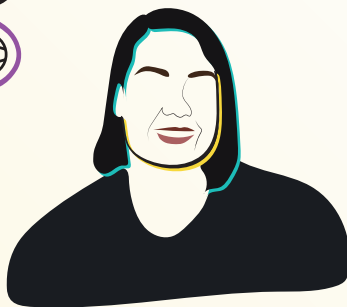


KEL(LY) RAKOWSKI

**LEX - Social app
for the LGBTQ+
community**

USA

Kelly is a photo editor and graphic designer, born and based in New York, USA. She openly disclosed her identity as an LGBTQ+ individual in her late adolescence, and she has been committed to promoting queer culture through her work since then. She has worked for several prestigious magazines such as The Vogue and Metropolis and, since 2014, she has also been the founder and curator of a well-known Instagram account/archive about historical queer women. Since her youth, she has developed a passion for connecting with people online. In 2019, this passion has led her to create LEX, the first official social app dedicated to connecting and empowering the LGBTQ+ community.



ARLAN HAMILTON

**Backstage Capital -
Venture Capital
Fund**

USA

Arlan Hamilton was born in Mississippi in 1980 and grew up in Texas. She is an African American entrepreneur and investor, and the founder and managing partner of Backstage Capital, an innovative venture capital fund investing in "underestimated founders", including women, people of colour and members of the LGBTQ+ community. Before launching her fund, Hamilton worked as a blogger and writer. She started working on her fund in 2015 and managed to successfully build it from scratch while homeless and poor. Hamilton has received several awards and public acknowledgement, including recognition from Business Insider in 2019 as one of the most powerful LGBTQ+ people in tech.

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VICTORIA NELSON

Deaf4Deaf - Sign language
counselling service

USA

Victoria is a deaf British female entrepreneur. She is the founder and Managing Director of Deaf4Deaf, the UK's first professional sign language counselling service for deaf people. Her innovative enterprise was launched in 2016 and is a deaf-led and deaf-owned business inspired out of deaf people's need for opportunities in accessing mental health support. In building her enterprise, Nelson assembled a large team of sign language therapists who provide mental health counselling to deaf people all over the UK and Ireland. She was awarded with the top prize funding of £30,000 at the 'Stelios Awards for Disabled Entrepreneurs' in 2019.



BRITTANY SCHIAVONE

Brittany's Baskets of Hope
Non Profit
Organisation

USA

Born in 1989, Brittany is a North American female entrepreneur with Down Syndrome. In 2016, she established the non-profit organisation Brittany's Baskets of Hope (BBoH) to support families with babies having Down Syndrome. Drawing from her own experiences, Brittany and her team create custom care packages, including clothes, toys, informative books about Down Syndrome, and essential items. BBoH has distributed hundreds of baskets to families across all 50 US states and Puerto Rico. Recognized for her mission, Brittany was honoured as the L'Oreal Paris Woman of Worth National Honoree in 2019 in New York City.

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