

Expo 2020 Dubai Programme for People and Planet

WORLD MAJLIS AGENDA

International Day of Women and Girls in Science



DATE

Friday, 11th February 2022

TIME

12.30 to 2.30 PM

VENUE

Terra – the Sustainability Pavilion

THE TOPIC

CHANGEMAKEHER:

Advancing diversity in the tech world

in collaboration with Australia and New Zealand

History has shown numerous examples of female science superstars. We owe the world's first computer programme to Great Britain's Ada Lovelace, in 1843; Marie Curie was the first person to be awarded two science-related Nobel Prizes while 33 years later, her own daughter Irene Joliot-Curie became a Nobel laureate herself. By 1960, according to government statistics, more than one in four US programmers were women.

However, only 35% of students in the areas of science and tech today in higher education worldwide are women – that percentage falls below 10% in areas such as information technology and engineering. Less than 40% of the current global STEM workforce is female and the ratio deteriorates in engineering and tech jobs.

Despite many initiatives to encourage girls to choose these subjects at school – and women to pursue careers in science and tech sectors – progress has been slow. On the occasion of International Day of Women and Girls in Science, let's explore how encouraging more women and girls to take their legitimate place in science, tech, engineering, and mathematics is not only possible but also for the greater good of us all.

- Why is lack of gender diversity in science an issue and why should we care?
- What are some of the factors creating barriers for women and girls when trying to access the science and tech fields today?
- Are there parts of the world, or certain sectors, where the gender balance is reversed?
- What can be done to debug the diversity gap? What strategies have been the most successful in opening up science and tech opportunities for all?

MODERATOR



Elise Labott
Founder and CEO, Zivvy Media

Elise Labott is the founder and CEO of Zivvy Media, a digital platform engaging a Gen Z audience on global issues. She is an adjunct professor at American University's School of International Service and a guest host at Sirius XM.

Elise is a leading journalist on foreign affairs, whose work appears in Politico Magazine, The Guardian, and Foreign Policy. As Global Affairs Correspondent for CNN for two decades, she covered seven Secretaries of State and reported from more than 80 countries. Elise is a global ambassador for Vital Voices and serves on the advisory council of Global Kids-DC, a program which introduces high school students in underserved communities to international affairs. She is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

PARTICIPANTS



HE Sheikha Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi
Former Minister in the Government of United Arab Emirates

Sheikha Lubna holds the distinction of being the first Emirati woman to assume a ministerial post (2004), an achievement that put the UAE on the international map of female empowerment.

Leading to success four key ministries: 1st world Minister of State for Tolerance (2016-2017), Minister of Economy (2004-2008), Minister of Foreign Trade (2008-2013) and Minister of International Cooperation and Development (2013-2016), Sheikha Lubna was appointed President of Zayed University (2014-2018) for her drive, commitment and determination to achieve the educational priorities set by the UAE Government to attain the hallmark of excellency and position Zayed University amongst the premier renowned international universities.

Sheikha Lubna represents the face of women's empowerment, ranking 36th Most Powerful Women on World's 100 Most Powerful Women List by Forbes 2017.

In 2017, Sheikha Lubna ranked 36th Most Powerful Woman on The World's 100 Most Powerful Women List by Forbes Magazine and topped the List of Arab women competing under same List.

An inspirational and influential female leader, Her Excellency continues to earn highest global accolades for her distinctive accomplishments, including presidential medals.



Eng Mariam Saeed Aljenaibi

Agriculture Engineer and Entrepreneur, UAE

Engineer Mariam Saeed Aljenaibi is a graduate from the United Arab University as an Agribusiness Major, and an Alumni of the USA International Visitors Leadership Program in Agriculture and Food. With over 10 years' experience in the agriculture field, she was chosen by ITP as one of 100 active personalities to follow in 2017.

Her first company in 2015 was Alebdaa Althahabi; a company that set up more than 12 organic farms, following the UAE and international standards. It also provided technical support for the Dubai Municipality "Grow Your Own Food" initiative in 2016. Through this project, Alebdaa Althahabi spread awareness to more than 2000 people, teaching them how to grow their own foods.

Eng. Mariam is also the co-founder of Organic Guild General Trading (since 2016) and Nabta Agriculture (since 2018). Together they represent more than 1000 people who have agriculture as a hobby or business who have now been connected through communication and WhatsApp called "Nabta". They also represent international companies from the UK, Austria, Germany, and India. Their target is to have a strong agricultural community by providing both information and organic, sustainable tools that are of high quality and easy to use.

Eng. Mariam is also member of the Sharjah Women Business Council.

Anna Andersone

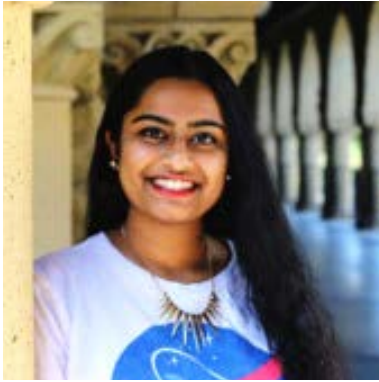
Chief Empowerment Officer, Riga TechGirls, Latvia



Anna Andersone is Chief Empowerment Officer at Riga TechGirls, a non-profit inspiring and educating women and girls about technology and supporting them in becoming the architects of the future. The future will be built using technology and women and girls need to take active part in creating it.

Anna is on the board of Latvia's startup community TechHub Riga, supporting female founded startups and initiatives, organising events and policies to support startups. Last year she became part of the Riga City Council ICT consultative advisory board and is participating in the biggest tech conference in Baltics TechChill content creation and moderation. Every year Anna with her team organises a full day international Women in Tech conference (October) and Women in Tech Hackathon (March).

Her background and experience lies within building design and tech companies like FROONT, berta.me and HungryLab and supporting Latvia' start-up ecosystem and actively being outspoken about gender equality in tech. She has grown the Riga TechGirls community supporting women in IT at a start-up acceleration rate, training more than 4000 women in 2020 and more than 6000 in 2021. Anna continues her journey as an entrepreneur, developing her brand of special clothing that promotes hugs and touches for warmer relationships: bewithclothing.com.



Akshaya Dinesh

Founder and CEO, Spellbound, USA

Akshaya Dinesh is the current founder and CEO of Spellbound, a stealth startup backed by the founders/CEOs of Github, Kayak, Warby Parker, Sendgrid, and Notion.

Before starting Spellbound, she was the co-founder and CEO of Ladder, the professional community platform for the next generation. She's a technical founder and dropped out of Stanford University to become an entrepreneur.

She's also been to 45 hackathons, has been an engineer at companies like Microsoft, Bloomberg, AOL, plus more, and actively champions more diversity in tech leadership.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS



Professor Dame Juliet Gerrard FRSNZ, HonFRSC

Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, Government of New Zealand

Juliet trained at Oxford University and moved to Aotearoa in 1993 where her career has included roles in both Crown Research Institutes and universities. Juliet's research background is broad and interdisciplinary, with particular interests in fundamental and applied protein science. She has held an Industry and Outreach Fellowship with Callaghan Innovation, founded a start-up company, chaired the Marsden Council, served on the Board of Directors of Plant and Food Research, and is currently on the Board of Te Papa.

Since Juliet's appointment in 2018 as the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, Kaitohutohu Mātanga Pūtaiao Matua ki te Pirimia, she has worked from a base of four founding principles: rigour, inclusivity, transparency, and accessibility. She has supported the science and science advisor community to provide advice to the PM, ministers, and the public on a wide range of topics, including advice on the Christchurch Mosque shootings, the response to the Whakaari | White Island eruption, the Cannabis referendum, rheumatic fever, and the Covid-19 pandemic. The Office has released two major reports, *Rethinking plastics in Aotearoa New Zealand* and *The future of commercial fishing in Aotearoa New Zealand*.

Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith

Australian Government Women in STEM Ambassador

Professor of Practice in Science Communication, University of New South Wales, Australia



As Australia's Women in STEM Ambassador, she advises the Australian Government on gender equity in STEM. Her Office works with the business, education and government sectors to increase the participation of women and girls in STEM education and careers. Her office achieves this through a combination of education, research, advocacy, and policy advice.

Harvey-Smith is a Ph.D. astrophysicist with 20 years of experience in scientific research, including the use of supercomputers to gain insights from complex data on the evolution of stars, galaxies, and black holes. She has written more than 50 academic publications and led global research teams. She was previously the project scientist at CSIRO for both the Square Kilometre Array – a continent-spanning next-generation radio telescope that will survey billions of years of cosmic history – and its precursor, the \$188M Australian SKA Pathfinder telescope. She is a recipient of the CSIRO Chairman's Medal and the Eureka Prize for Promoting the Understanding of Australian Science Research.

Harvey-Smith presented on ABC Television's popular science series *Stargazing Live* and has appeared live on stage with Apollo astronauts including Buzz Aldrin. She is a TEDx speaker, regular science media commentator and author of five popular science books including the international children's bestseller *Under the Stars: Astrophysics for Bedtime*.