



# Women Entrepreneurship and Education

*e-zine*



WeRin Project

| Issue 6/January 2024





# Welcome to the WeRin Project Newsletter!

We are delighted to introduce you to our last bi-annual magazine dedicated to Women Entrepreneurs in Regional Inclusive Entrepreneurial Ecosystems (WeRin), a forward-thinking European initiative with a team of 14 partners who are passionate about increasing the share of female graduate entrepreneurs.

Through this project, we, a group of academics and practitioners passionate about entrepreneurship, aim to make entrepreneurship education and support programmes more inclusive for women.

## **What is in this issue?**

We open the sixth and last issue of this e-zine with the latest developments from the WeRin project, including the final Coordination Meeting that took place in Münster (Germany), a summary of our partners participation in the RENT conference 2023, the Women's\* Empowerment Convention organised by FH Münster, our WeRin Community of Practice, and the University of Münster, under the umbrella organisation of [REACH - Euregio Startup Center](#).

We also share with you the results of the regional pilot-tests organised by our partners, one of the good practice cases identified by the project, and continue to place the spotlight on a new selection of fascinating women entrepreneurs.

As our project comes to an end, we encourage you to dive deeper and find out about these and other aspects of WeRin in this e-zine.

We wish you a pleasant read!

*University Industry Innovation Network (UIIN)  
on behalf of the WeRin Project Consortium*



# CONTENTS

04

## News from WeRin

- WeRin Final Coordination Meeting..... 4
- Navigating the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem:  
Belonging and Embeddedness for Women  
Entrepreneurs..... 7
- Women's\* Empowerment Convention in  
Münster, Germany..... 9
- Beyond WeRin: Sustainability of the Results..... 12
- Join the WeRin Community of Practice..... 14
- Pilot Testing Sessions Across Regions..... 15
- Good Practice: Exploring Entrepreneurial Spirit:  
Insights from the Kickstart Academy..... 18
- WeRin – A Good example of Creating Deep  
Change in the Entrepreneurial Ecosystems..... 19

22

## Meet the Change-makers in the Women's Entrepreneurship Landscape

- Karen Dolva (No Isolation)..... 22
- Charlotte Aschim (TotalCtrl)..... 23

# News from WeRin



# WeRin Final Coordination Meeting

*Author: Maynara Furquim (FH Münster)*

The Final Coordination Meeting of the WeRin project took place on December 7th and 8th 2023 in Münster, Germany. Organised by [FH Münster University of Applied Sciences](#) and hosted at [REACH – EUREGIO Start-up Center](#), the partner universities, the regional non-academic partners, and international organisations came together to discuss the final steps of the project.

The meeting covered all Work Packages, reviewing the project's outputs, reflecting on recent activities performed (Pilot Testing Sessions, Local Capacity Building Sessions, and Final Events), and planning the delivery of the final outputs. FH Münster, as the lead partner through the [Science-to-Business Marketing Research Centre](#), covered some administrative aspects that are key for the delivery of the final report.

Members of each partner institution valuably contributed to the meeting by addressing

their specific project results. This included the successful completion of most of the project deliverables, such as the [Good Practice Webinar series](#) and [Role Models](#), with only a few details left to be covered, with the finalisation of the set of criteria for accreditation of inclusive entrepreneurial education approaches and the evaluation report, to wrap up the project.

There was also active discussion about showcasing the project to key stakeholders, to validate WeRin and gather feedback on the project resources and its impact. ECWT (European Centre for Women and Technology), the Norwegian partner of WeRin, will take over this initiative and organise a round table with global experts and invite the WeRin partners to cooperate in the exchange.

*The WeRin consortium for the Final Coordination Meeting in Münster*



# WeRin Final Coordination Meeting

*The WeRin partners toasting to the success of the project*



The consortium also took part in a second sustainability workshop, led by [UIIN](#), in which they explored the future possibilities for WeRin after the official time frame of the project is over. Based on the results of the first sustainability workshop (held online in April 2023), all partners collaborated individually and in groups on how the WeRin as consortium could continue together on its mission to create more inclusive entrepreneurial education and training programmes for women entrepreneurs.

UIIN will produce a report with the results from both workshops, so that partners can act on it to sustain the network and its mission.

It was a lot of work, thinking and discussion to bring the project towards its completion.

However, there was also time for a lot of catching up and networking in between the sessions over the two days. Following the first day of the meeting, the partners gathered for a trip to Münster Christmas markets to enjoy together some typical German delicatessens from the holiday season.

The WeRin project is officially coming to a close, but it will certainly continue. Our results generated a meaningful impact through the regions and will keep doing so. We appreciate all stakeholders that got involved and supported us in our research during the last three years – Thank you!

We are all very grateful and proud of the powerful collaborations the WeRin project has brought. Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and stay tuned. There is more to come!

# Navigating the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Belonging And Embeddedness for Women

**Entrepreneurs** - *Authors: Saskia Stoker (AUAS), Ingrid Wakkee (AUAS), Ana Cruz-Garcia (MTU)*

At the 2023 RENT conference titled “Taming Uncertainty” held in Gdansk, Poland, our WeRin partners, Saskia Stoker and Ana Cruz García presented a paper titled ‘Navigating the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Belonging and Embeddedness for Women Entrepreneurs’. This paper was presented in the gender track and draws on 33 semi-structured, in-depth interviews with women entrepreneurs in Ireland and The Netherlands (data obtained from the WeRin regional scan). The constructive input from experts in the field of gender and entrepreneurship, including Sally Jones, Helle Neergaard and Natalia Vershina will improve the paper, which was well received.

Being embedded in the entrepreneurial ecosystem is crucial for entrepreneurs as it determines access to resources and support. For women entrepreneurs, becoming embedded is relatively difficult due to gender disparities and potential exclusion (Roos, 2021; Welter, 2020; Yousafzai et al., 2021). Feminist studies of entrepreneurship have focussed on how women perform belonging as a strategy to cope with this lack of embeddedness (Stead, 2017).

Despite extensive coverage of embeddedness in entrepreneurship, few studies have addressed how women entrepreneurs’ embeddedness connects to their sense of belonging and vice versa and how this relationship in turn affects their success in venture creation.

By adopting a post-structural feminist lens, we explore the reciprocal relationship

between women entrepreneurs’ experiences of belonging and embeddedness in their entrepreneurial ecosystem. By doing so, our objective is to contribute to the research on women entrepreneurship and shed light on the factors that contribute to the success and well-being of women entrepreneurs within their ecosystems.

Data is part of the WeRin project on gender inclusivity in regional entrepreneurial ecosystems. The sample included both experienced and early start-up entrepreneurs who were asked to reflect on gender matters during their entrepreneurial pathway.



## Navigating the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Belonging and Embeddedness for Women Entrepreneurs

Our findings shed light on the embeddedness of women entrepreneurs within the larger entrepreneurial ecosystem. For many women entrepreneurs, their integration into this entrepreneurial ecosystem is limited. While they do manage to acquire essential resources and support despite encountering gender-related challenges, there are noticeable gaps in their cognitive embeddedness (shared goals and values) and relational embeddedness (trust) when it comes to mixed-gender collaborations. Consequently, many turn to women-only networks to fulfil both moral and practical support needs. Within these women-only groups, cognitive and relational embeddedness and belonging are generally high.

However, these networks appear somewhat isolated from the broader ecosystem, despite providing access to valuable contacts and potential customers. Some participants therefore express concerns that these women-only networks may unintentionally create silos, and it remains uncertain if the resources obtained from them can truly compete with those available in the broader ecosystem. Conversely, many women entrepreneurs, even when embedded and connected to the ecosystem, still felt like outsiders and did not belong. They cope with this by employing strategies such as "identity switching" and "modelling the norm," rather than actively seeking to "disrupt" the system.

Our study addresses a significant literature gap by examining the gendered reciprocal relationship between women entrepreneurs'



embeddedness and their sense of belonging. Furthermore, our study recognizes that women entrepreneurs may still grapple with a sense of not fully belonging, even when they are embedded into the ecosystem, nor does an increased sense of belonging seem to enhance embeddedness.

Interestingly, while frequent involvement in women-only networks might suggest collective action towards change, these networks often serve as individual workarounds to gain necessary, rather than platforms for systemic change within the ecosystem. Future studies might delve deeper into the motivation of entrepreneurs to engage in both individual and collective action to create a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Overall, this research has implications for supporting and promoting women entrepreneurs. It underscores the need for more inclusive practices to equate embeddedness with belonging.

# WOMEN'S \* EMPOWERMENT CONVENTION

Equity, Leadership, Career  
and Entrepreneurship

## Women's\* Empowerment Convention in Münster, Germany

*Author: Maynara Furquim (FH Münster)*

The first [Women's\\* Empowerment Convention](#) took place on November 22nd, 2023, at the Atlantic Hotel Münster, Germany. The event was organised in the higher education network of the University of Münster and the FH Münster University of Applied Sciences in the [REACH – EUREGIO Start-up Center](#) and was realised in cooperation with regional and supra-regional organisations.

The Women's\* Empowerment Convention strives to strengthen the representation and visibility of women in entrepreneurship, the start-up scene, leadership and innovation and showcase their achievements and their potential for the innovation culture.

With more than 250 participants, 30+ experts

and 8 workshops, the convention was divided into two parts: a day programme with a keynote speaker, various workshops running in parallel, and a showcase of initiatives for women's\* empowerment; and a night programme, with a poetry slam and a panel discussion. Throughout the day, participants had multiple networking opportunities.

The convention brought together students, scientists, entrepreneurs, companies, institutions, employees, and alumni to discuss topics related to equality, leadership, careers, and start-ups. It was inclusive in every way, welcoming men and women from different backgrounds, with special attention given to the international guests, [cont.]

## Women's\* Empowerment Convention in Münster, Germany

who were offered four workshops in English and live subtitles (in multiple languages) during the keynote speech and panel discussion.

The day started with an inspiring keynote speech by [Tijen Onaran](#). Tijen is an entrepreneur, investor, best-selling author and one of Germany's most important opinion makers when it comes to diversity, visibility, and digitalisation, as well as one of the most prominent voices in German business. Her motto is "Diversity is not a trend. Diversity is the cornerstone of a company's success!" It was the perfect start to a day full of valuable insights.

After that, the participants took part in exciting workshops with the experts, about varied crucial topics, such as "Inclusive Finance", which our WeRin Project Leader,

[Dr. Sue Rossano-Rivero](#), and WeRin Project Coordinator, [Maynara Furquim](#), conducted. The session showcased the WeRin results and piloted some of the resources produced ([WeRin Toolbox](#)), especially under the Principle of Visibility of Support & Finance.

Rossano-Rivero made the participants delve into an analysis of gender-related challenges encountered by women entrepreneurs in accessing venture capital financing, aiming to glean insights into how financing can be more inclusive for women. The session also explored how banks contribute to a more inclusive landscape for funding in entrepreneurship. The discussions encompassed the underrepresentation of



*Dr. Sue Rossano-Rivero during the Inclusive Financing Workshop.  
Photo: ©Gesa Niessen*

women investors and its impact on the presence of women entrepreneurs in the start-up arena.

## Women's\* Empowerment Convention in Münster, Germany

The participants were:

- Enthusiastic students at various levels of higher education (both graduate and undergraduate) with a keen interest in entrepreneurship.
- Faculty members and alumni from diverse universities within the region.
- (Women) Entrepreneurs aiming to deepen their understanding of the financial landscape for entrepreneurship and eager to explore funding options offered by banks.

experience with financing: [Christina Wulf](#), managing director and co-founder of [Closd](#), who got funded by a bank; and [Lara Wagemann](#), co-founder and managing director of [AllCup](#), who was funded through venture capital.

Actionable steps that both women entrepreneurs and the broader entrepreneurial ecosystems can take to address this critical issue in the realm of inclusive finance were explored. The workshop concluded with [Simone Plum](#), funding consultant from the [NRW.BANK](#), examining the various options banks provide for women entrepreneurs committed to making a meaningful impact.

The day ended with an energizing poetry slam by Lila Sovia, a multifaceted rap, hip hop and spoken word artist from Hamburg. Following this a diverse panel discussion occurred with extraordinary speakers on the topic of "New Work, EqualPay, Work-Life-Blending: Are new working conditions changing the opportunities for women\*?". It was the perfect closure for an inspiring day, reinforcing that everyone, everywhere can play a part in achieving transformative change for gender equity at all levels of society. Gender equity is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.

The next Women's\* Empowerment Convention is already confirmed for early 2024, and also in 2025. What a crucial achievement for the Münster ecosystem to keep discussing and engaging to make the ecosystem more inclusive!



*Simone Plum, from the NRW Bank, during the Inclusive Financing Workshop. Photo: ©Gesa Niessen*

Collaboratively, the participants investigated and assessed the strategies employed by successful women entrepreneurs to overcome gender-specific barriers. Group discussions were carried out throughout the whole workshop to integrate all perspectives using real-life examples. For that two women entrepreneurs were invited to share their

# Beyond WeRin: Sustainability of the results

*Author: Jose Villagran (UIIN)*

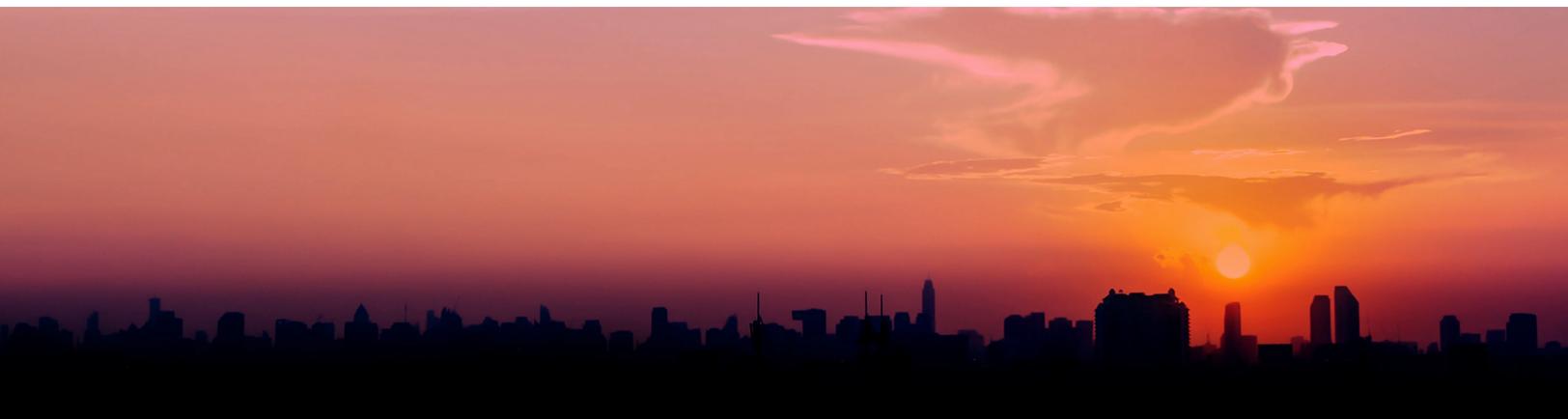
In our journey through the WeRin project, sustainability has been a regular discussion topic. But what does sustainability mean in the context of a project like WeRin? We want to share with you what we have done and our future plans, laying a path towards impact beyond our project lifetime.

## The Essence of Sustainability in WeRin

This project has explored sustainability both from an individual and a group perspective, in order to show partners what kind of sustainability actions can be implemented by them alone and which actions could benefit from a collaborative approach. Partners have participated in 2 sustainability workshops organized in 2023.

During our first sustainability workshop, we embarked on a collaborative journey, brainstorming and prioritizing sustainability ideas. These ranged from individual organizational benefits to broader consortium advantages. The key outcomes were multifaceted, focusing on creating value for the entire project and its stakeholders. Here are some highlights:

- **Entrepreneurial Day:** A convergence of stakeholders for learning and networking, with activities including workshops, lectures, and good practice exchanges.
- **Business Clinics for Students:** Supporting women-run businesses while simultaneously fostering student learning and skill development.
- **Inspirational Talks by Women Entrepreneurs:** Increasing visibility and showcasing role models.
- **Transforming WeRin:** Evolving into a multicultural centre, involving students and women entrepreneurs in joint projects.
- **Integrating WeRin Outputs into Curricula:** Enriching entrepreneurship courses with project outcomes.
- **Promoting Outputs on Partner Websites:** Enhancing visibility and reach.
- **Keeping the Consortium Alive:** Exploring follow-up proposals and new funding schemes and priorities.





## Beyond WeRin: Sustainability of the results

Building on our first workshop, the second sustainability workshop in the WeRin project marked a significant step forward in our journey. This session delved deeper into the practicalities and strategies for ensuring the long-term impact of our initiatives.

The workshop brought together diverse perspectives, fostering an environment of collaborative ideation. Participants engaged in dynamic discussions, sharing their individual insights and experiences. This rich exchange of ideas not only broadened partner understanding but also highlighted the multifaceted nature of sustainability and how each of us perceives it differently.

The session underscored the importance of creating tangible impacts that resonate with our target groups. This involved integrating the project's learnings and outputs into educational curricula, supporting women entrepreneurs, and enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

### **The Road Ahead**

As we look forward, our commitment to sustainability is strong. With each partner bringing unique strengths to the table, we aim to collaboratively sustain the project while creating new value for our target groups.

Whether it is in the form of a new project with a focus on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), or partners focus on integrating the WeRin outputs and approaches into their operations, this is just the beginning; there's more to be done, and our consortium is ready to push forward, enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystems in our regions both individually and collaboratively.

While our efforts in sustainability are now essential to the WeRin project, there's another crucial element that adds to its dynamism - the WeRin community of practice. This community plays a pivotal role in bringing our sustainability efforts to life, creating a collaborative space where ideas, experiences, and best practices are shared.

# Join the WeRin Community of Practice

*Author: Ana Cruz (MTU)*

Our vibrant WeRin Community of Practice (CoP) invites you to become part of our dynamic and thriving network. Our mission is to foster an environment where individuals like you can openly exchange their knowledge, skills, mindsets, research and educational activities related to the themes of gender and inclusivity in entrepreneurship with other like-minded people.

The WeRin Community of Practice (WeRin CoP) includes all WeRin partners and over 900 members in our LinkedIn community. It is created to encourage the members to share their knowledge and skills, mindsets and research and educational activities related to gender and inclusivity in entrepreneurship in education and beyond.

Everyone is welcome to join our Community of Practice, as a member you can:

- Gain access to an online community boasting nearly 1,000 like-minded individuals spanning the breadth of Europe.
- Benefit from peer learning.
- Exclusive events hosted online by our Partner Institutions.
- Participation in discussions as well as access to any materials produced for the events.



- Opportunity to showcase your news, publications, or events on female entrepreneurship, diversity, and inclusion to an audience that values your insights.

The WeRin Community of Practice helps promote diverse and inclusive entrepreneurship education not only to education institutions but also to other primary stakeholders in the ecosystem. The WeRin partners are organising activities related to gender, inclusivity and entrepreneurship every three months and these will vary from guest speakers, research pieces, blogs, interviews and more with the format being written or hybrid for presentations for the widest reach.

## **Benefits**

If you're eager to join our WeRin Community of Practice, simply visit our [LinkedIn page](#) and become a valued member of our inclusive community. We eagerly anticipate your arrival and look forward to welcoming you! For any questions, please [contact us](#).



## Pilot Testing Sessions across Europe

*Author: Ahiram Martinez (ACEEU)*

Over the past few months, the WeRin Project has embarked on an exciting phase: bringing our resources into real-world application. Our academic partners have initiated the pilot testing stage of the project by conducting the "Breaking Barriers and Unlocking Horizons: Inclusive Entrepreneurship 101 WeRin Workshop" across Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, Croatia, and Turkey. These workshops aimed to test and gather feedback on our key resources, namely the WeRin Toolbox, WeRLearning Approach, and WeRin Knowledge Port - to refine them to foster a more inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystem in academic and non-academic organisations.

The workshops were designed as a journey towards transformation. Each local partner customised the workshop to meet the unique needs of their context, resulting in successful

sessions that received positive feedback and gathered interest from a diverse group of participants.

Munster Technological University (MTU) in Cork, Ireland, was the first to embark on this piloting phase. Collaborating with the Rubicon Center, they organised two sessions in August and October, focusing on engaging participants of the center's entrepreneurship programs with the WeRin Principles. These sessions helped identify the strengths of available resources and areas of opportunity to improve them. Overall, the students were satisfied with the sessions and highlighted the importance of awareness of female entrepreneurs' challenges and barriers when developing their companies.

## Pilot Testing Sessions across Europe



Istanbul Technical University (ITU), in collaboration with ARI Teknokent, conducted the workshop in September 2023. The workshop brought together various stakeholders, including entrepreneurship educators, program managers, female students, and women entrepreneurs. The workshop focused on discussing challenges related to gender biases in entrepreneurship. To enrich the group discussions, three women entrepreneurs, namely Elif Ezerdi, Gülşah Çakır, and Tuğse Baş were invited to share their experiences. During the workshop, the participants discussed various challenges, such as family reactions to women entrepreneurs, the importance of perseverance in business, and reversing gender role perceptions in business.

The University of Zagreb Faculty of Organization and Informatics, our partner in Croatia, conducted two pilot test sessions in October and November, similar to those conducted in Ireland. The sessions were attended by a total of 78 educators, entrepreneurship program managers, women entrepreneurs and students who came together to explore the WeRin journey and experience its various resources. The participation of women entrepreneurs such as Emilija Stručić, Kristina Bajsić, and Tamara Šabić - who are founders or co-founders of

different companies - enriched the workshop and provided more practical insights into the topic. The sessions confirmed that the WeRin journey framework is an excellent way to present the topic, and the students were easily engaged in planned activities, showing interest and satisfaction with the new knowledge gained.

In Germany, FH Münster University of Applied Sciences and various organisations organised the inaugural Women's Empowerment Convention in November. During the event, Dr. Sue Rossano-Rivero, the WeRin Project Leader, and Maynara Furquim, the WeRin Project Coordinator, conducted a workshop to present the project results and pilot some resources, such as the WeRin Toolbox. The workshop included a discussion of all the WeRin principles, with a particular focus on the "Inclusive Finance" Principle. Group discussions were held on the financing experiences of two external stakeholders, Christina Wulf and Lara Wagemann, who funded their companies with the help of a bank and venture capital. The use of real-life examples to connect resources was a crucial approach that contributed to the success of the event. Participants expressed high satisfaction with the workshop and showed interest in the project.

## Pilot Testing Sessions across Europe

Finally, in the Netherlands our partner Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences conducted the workshop by following the complete WeRin Journey and even got feedback to it. The materials proposed by the WeRin Journey were tested with 50+ participants. The activities pursued the objective to create a safe space in the classroom where sensitive conversations could be held and details could be shared.

While the goal was partially met, one of the learnings is that the activity could work better in smaller groups. Another objective was to raise awareness among students of an inclusive ecosystem as something positive and desirable for all future entrepreneurs and organisers were glad to find out that

the participants were on the same page about this. The activities were positively rated by the participants, who stated that they found it interesting and motivational.

These sessions across Europe have collectively provided the WeRin team with invaluable feedback. These insights will be crucial in refining the resources for their final version. Although each session was unique in its execution, they all highlighted the significant interest and impact of the topic within the entrepreneurial community. The WeRin Project is leading in creating an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem, highlighting the profound need and enthusiasm for such initiatives in diverse regions.



# Exploring Entrepreneurial Spirit: Insights from the Kickstart Academy

In the dynamic world of entrepreneurship, the Kickstart Academy stands out as a beacon of innovation and support. Set against the backdrop of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, this webinar delved into how the Academy fuels the entrepreneurial spirit among students and budding entrepreneurs.

One key highlight is the region's focus on increasing female participation in startups. While women are underrepresented in the sector, initiatives aim to boost their involvement to 33% by 2025. The Academy isn't just about numbers; it's a cradle for cultivating diverse ideas and fostering a network of support.

Participants benefit from a comprehensive nine-week program that includes workshops on prototyping, marketing, financing, and pitching. This hands-on experience is invaluable, providing a practical foundation for transforming ideas into viable businesses.

Moreover, the Academy's focus on diversity - in gender, background, and academic disciplines - enriches the learning environment and promotes varied perspectives in entrepreneurship.

As we look at the evolution of the Kickstart Academy, it's evident that its impact extends beyond its immediate participants. It serves as a model for other regions and institutions aiming to nurture entrepreneurial talents and contribute to a vibrant startup ecosystem.

This program's success stories and its commitment to diversity and practical learning make it a noteworthy case study in the realm of entrepreneurial education and development.

This Good Practice summary has been extracted from our Good Practice Webinar Collection. [Watch Kickstart Academy's video and many more here.](#)



Webinar on the Good Practice  
**Academy for  
Entrepreneurship**

This webinar is hosted by The Faculty of Organization and Informatics, of the University of Zagreb



# WeRin – A Good example of Creating Deep Change in the Entrepreneurial Ecosystems

*Author: Dimitris Raftopoulos (ECWT)*

The WeRin project has proven to be an inspiring journey, not just for the project partners, but for all those who have been involved. From the enlightening Capacity Building Sessions to the engaging networking events and various research & development activities, participants have been deeply impacted. From what just started out as a vision, this endeavour has evolved into a remarkable journey, ultimately emerging as a true game changer. In an excellent display of collaboration, each partner made significant contributions in the form of ideas, concepts, materials, and invaluable feedback. Through an interactive and iterative approach, WeRin has quickly established itself as an important point of reference. In the context of the aforementioned, ECWT effectively utilized its portfolio projects and the extensive network it possesses, thereby showcasing WeRin to

various high-level European and global stakeholders, and actors of the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

One of the important highlights occurred when the project was introduced during the highly-prestigious IKIGAI workshop, "4.0 Skills – Women's Path to IKIGAI" held at the World Expo 2020 on the 24th of October 2021 in Dubai. The IKIGAI event shed light on the crucial role that IKIGAI concept and DEIS (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability) play in fostering the success of aspiring women entrepreneurs. WeRin was highlighted as an iconic example of the European Union's commitment to supporting DEIS and taking decisive measures to empower women.





## WeRin – A Good example of Creating Deep Change in the Entrepreneurial Ecosystems

Moving forward, WeRin was used as a model of good practice in a joint national project - #GIL4W, the Greek Innovation Lab for Women between Greece and Norway, which aims to become the leading Greek ecosystem to adopt a gender-sensitive approach to innovation and entrepreneurship, integrating female talent into the Greek economy's sustainable, green, and digital post-Covid recovery. The GIL4W project has been acknowledged in the recently published 2023 report on gender equality in the European Union as a significant European case study in the thematic area of "Achieving Equal Participation Across Different Sectors of The Economy". The project is a collaborative effort involving five Ministries and ECWT, joined by twelve Public Actors and two market organizations.

The WeRin project materials have also served as a valuable point of reference and a prime example of good practice, being utilized in the creation of a Gender Observatory initiated by ECWT and set up funded by the HORIZON EUROPE programme through the EIT Climate KIC Community in the framework of the DISCO project.

Moreover, the key components of the project have been successfully showcased within the Communities of Practice of European (COVE's) and also are part of delivering on DEIS commitments in the Pact for Skills. WeRin stands as a shining example of how European Projects, with their inherent capitalization, play a crucial role in shaping not only the European economy but also the global economic landscape.



# Meet the Change-Makers

As part of the WeRin research and discovery phase, we showcased successful female role model entrepreneurs already embedded in the regional ecosystem.

By highlighting tenacious, ambitious and resourceful female entrepreneur role models and sharing their realistic advice on how they are succeeding, despite existing barriers, we take a step to strengthening female graduate entrepreneur inclusiveness.

Download the full collection [here](#)

## My entrepreneurial journey....



### Karen Dolva



**Business Name**  
NO ISOLATION - <https://www.noisolation.com/>



**Place**  
OSLO - LONDON - MÜNCHEN - ROTTERDAM



**Year started as entrepreneur**  
2015



**Number of employees**  
64 employees across 6 locations



**What is your highest level of education?**  
Masters Degree degree in Information Science and Interactive Design from the University of Oslo

*AV1 is the world's first telepresence robot that helps long-term ill children and young adults stay connected with their peers. The technology allows children keep up with education in the classroom, as well as stay in contact with family and friends, without being physically present.*

#### My targets are

1. People suffering from loneliness
2. We have started with the kids who are suffering from long-term illness
3. We focus also strongly on the elderly through a simple, one-button computer that bridges the communication gap between different generations

#### This is what characterises me

I am passionate about warm technology, usability, design-for-good and communication.

#### Which hubs / networks are you involved in?

- Atea
- Vodafone
- Barncancerfonden
- Special Effect
- Chartwell Cancer Trust
- ACS International Schools

#### My advice to girls and women who want to realise their dreams:

Go for your passion and realizing your dreams!

#### When I'm not working:

I like travelling and meeting other culturally diverse people fighting to break their social isolation

### Putting an end to loneliness:

check out Karen Dolva's [TedxTalk](#) with more than 2 M views

**My motto:**  
*"We reduce loneliness and social isolation through warm technology!"*



[www.werinproject.eu](http://www.werinproject.eu)

# Our entrepreneurial journey....

*One of Europe's most inspiring food waste changemakers*



## Charlotte Aschim



### Business Name

TotalCtrl - <https://totalctrl.com>



### Place

Oslo, Norway



### Year started as entrepreneur?

2017



### Number of employees

3



### What is your highest level of education?

Masters @Norwegian University of Life Sciences

### Our vision

Ending food waste across the value chain, through innovative technology that saves our customers valuable resources.

### Our challenges

Educating people to understand that problems can become opportunities when the right people come together!

### This is what characterises me

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

### When I'm not working:

From idea to global success, it took a bit more than a year! Since the start I'm passionately focusing on the business

### My motto:

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!

### Role models that inspire me:

[Amanda Wood](#), Stockholm Resilience Center

[Sara Seing Jervfors](#), Diet for a Green Planet, Södertälje Municipality

[Analisa Winther](#), Nordic Foodtech Ecosystem builder

### Which hubs / networks are you involved in?

Europe Waste Management Companies

City of Oslo Female Founded companies

Nordic Countries Software Female Founded Companies

Food processing Female Founded Companies

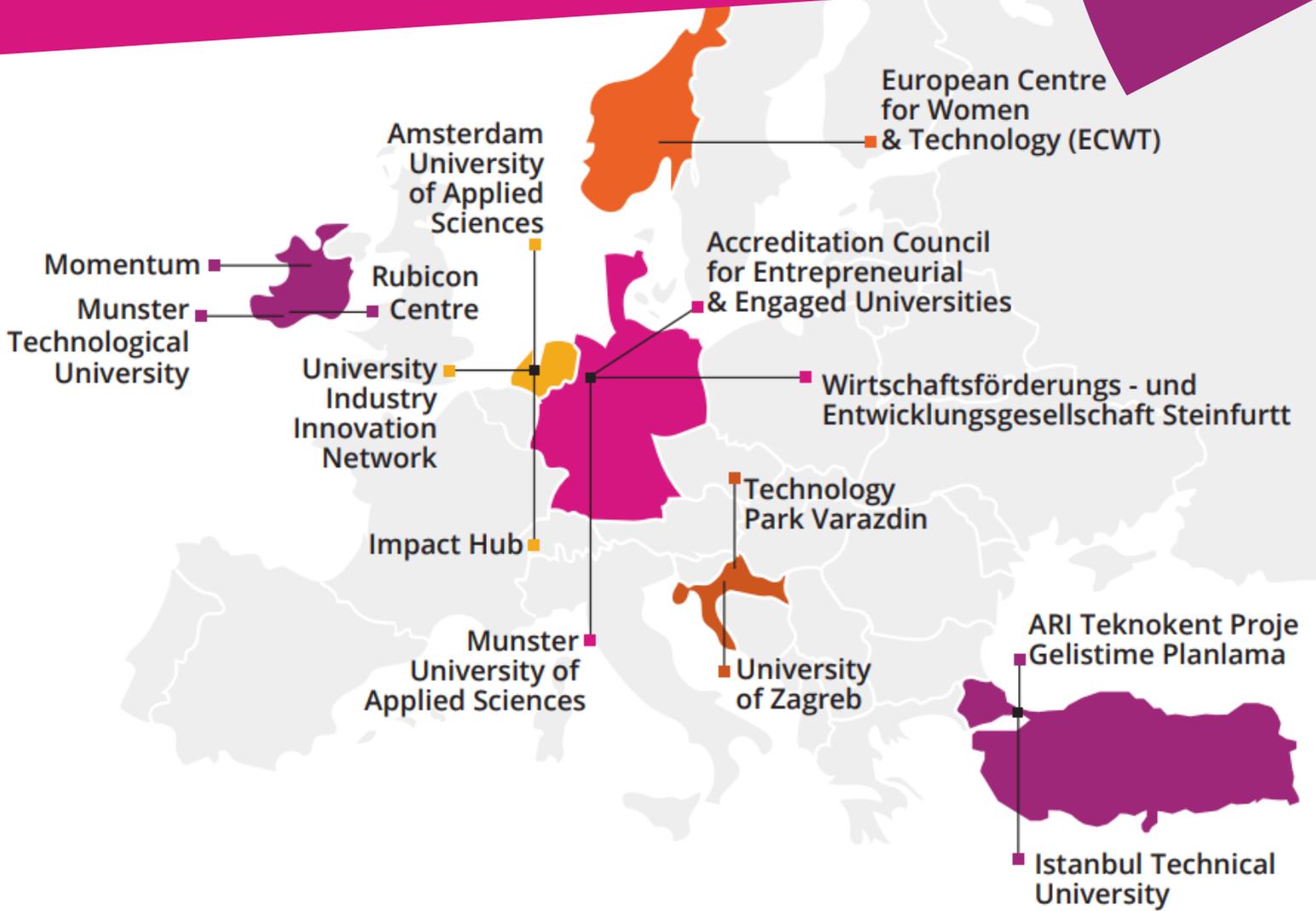
### My advice to girls and women

who want to realise their dreams:

1. Make sure you are solving a need that people are willing to pay for
2. Sell before you build
3. Show hard sales and throw away your elevator pitch
4. Building a business model based on sales is scalable, will increase shareholders values quickly and reduce the need for capital



[www.werinproject.eu](http://www.werinproject.eu)



# Our WeRin partnership across Europe

Funded by the ERASMUS+ Knowledge Alliance programme, the Women Entrepreneurs in Regional Inclusive Entrepreneurial Ecosystems – WeRin Project unites **14 partners** from network organizations, associations, research institutes, academia and businesses based in six countries in Europe.

Their expertise and strong reputation make a solid foundation for successful achievement of the intended project results.





# WeRin

## CONTACT

**Dr. Sue Rossano-Rivero**

WeRin Project Lead

Managing Director at Science-to-Business Marketing Research Centre

rossano@fh-muenster.de

[www.werinproject.eu](http://www.werinproject.eu)

Follow Us



in

