

**INSPIRING  
WOMEN**  
in Commerce and  
Contracting **2022**

A partnership of  
WorldCC Foundation  
and Icertis

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# Preface

Throughout history, women have made remarkable contributions in various fields and inspired countless others to follow in their footsteps. Our Inspiring Women program showcases the significant achievements of many incredible women working in our field of commerce and contracting.

Despite some progress in recent decades, it remains the case that women continue to face challenges and barriers, whether from unequal pay, restricted opportunities for career advancement, persistent gender stereotypes and biases or a lack of representation in leadership positions. There is still so much work to do. There are generations of women who will follow in the footsteps of those in these pages, women who need to believe they can dream big, and need to be encouraged and empowered to never give up on their goals.

By coming together through this program we grow in strength – our voices are amplified – together we support, celebrate, and empower each other. This book is a tribute to our Inspiring Women of 2022, to secure their place in history and to ensure that their stories continue to inspire others for years to come.



**Sally Guyer**  
President and Chief Executive Officer,  
WorldCC Foundation  
Global Chief Executive Officer,  
World Commerce & Contracting

I'm struck by how often women's work remains invisible: the unseen labor of juggling professional lives and caregiving at home; the unrecognized hours of championing cultures of well-being, diversity and equity at work and in our communities; the devalued hours of labor to produce goods or services for which women are paid 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. Unquestionably, the global pandemic disparately affected women and threatened to reverse decades of progress made toward gender equality.


WorldCC Foundation, in partnership with Icertis, refuses to accept this status quo. It is our joint purpose, passion, and pride to make the invisible visible through the Inspiring Women program. There's a saying "not all heroes wear capes", implying that some heroes go unnoticed. While we can't spotlight the vast contributions of so many women, we hope this list demonstrates that their efforts are seen and valued.

We are privileged to celebrate exceptional women from across the globe through this program. Their efforts are transforming homes, workplaces, supply chains, communities and societies to be more inclusive, fair and equitable. They are change-makers, innovators and glass-ceiling smashers; more so, they are inspiring and powerful role models for today and generations to come.



**Bernadette Bulacan**  
Chief Evangelist, Icertis

The following pages bring together the voices of WorldCC Foundation's Inspiring Women of 2022.

Through their words you can see why they have been chosen this year, as a force for good in the world of commerce and contracting and beyond 



## Nadiya Bigun

Deputy Minister at Ministry of Economy of Ukraine.  
Location: Ukraine

Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?

I'm head of procurement in defense state government. I have transformed the procurement process for 70 state enterprises and implemented open e-procurement systems.

Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.

In my role as Deputy Minister at the Ministry, I continually endeavor to inspire and influence others to strive for positive change. I am also passionate about ethics and sustainability both professionally and personally, so social value sits at the heart of my ethos.

Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?

I have established flexible schedules and full remote access that help women, especially those with children, stay in the working process during a lockdown. I am gender-balanced when recruiting ●

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*"I have established flexible schedules that help women stay in the working process during a lockdown"*



## Jennifer Bretana

Regional Director, Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development.  
Location: Philippines

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I am an urban and regional planner in government service who has passionately worked at the grassroots level since 2002. In my position, I have been directly exposed to the various socio-spatial challenges of the marginalized sectors and communities. These include women, children, indigenous peoples, and farmers, and I have had the opportunity to co-create solutions with them to bridge these social inequalities. Previously, as Head of the Provincial Planning and Development Office of South Cotabato, where two of the poorest municipalities in the region are located, I made it my personal mission to contribute to reducing poverty using integrity-building as a platform.

In 2015, I acted as Program Manager when South Cotabato partnered with civil society organizations and the business sector to create the Integrity Circle and implement its Integrity Program. The end goal of the program was to contribute to poverty reduction through integrity-building, increased business investments and sustainable job creation.

With this integrity-building program for job creation, South Cotabato became part of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in 2018, as the first OGP local member in the Philippines. As the point of contact for OGP, I managed the implementation of five commitments including the successful implementation of Open Contracting with ECCP and Hivos.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### **Innovation and entrepreneurship**

With a passion to create spaces of equity, I introduce innovations utilizing my experience as an environmental planner. I led the implementation of initiatives including South Cotabato's Integrity Model and Program, Good Governance Framework and Convergence Program for Poverty Reduction, and co-created with the civil society and the private sector 24 integrity mechanisms and five OGP commitments that harnessed digital technology in advancing transparency and accountability in government. These resulted in the development of online databases for procurement, infrastructure monitoring, and legislation, housed in one centralized platform.

### **Making a positive difference**

Innovations made in integrity-building and OGP have resulted in improved procurement processes, reduced delays in public infrastructure implementation, increased participation of the disadvantaged sectors, increased investments and decreasing poverty incidence. When the Philippines established the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development as the agency responsible for the management of housing and urban development, I continued to espouse the principles of OGP as Regional Director in providing access to decent housing and sustainable urban spaces. With the support of colleagues at work, I initiated the development of a web-based database that aims to protect homebuyers from illegal real estate practices. With this system for increased transparency, low-income families will be protected in achieving their basic right to shelter.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

I have always believed that leaders have stories to tell – stories with the power to influence and inspire others to move into action and make a difference. As a woman who has been through a broken marriage and abusive relationship, I believe I have inspired other women and have shown that women have inner strengths and abilities to rise above adversities and become bridging leaders.

As a public sector manager, I led the Provincial Planning and Development Office in initiating projects that require the participation of women, indigenous peoples, and other disadvantaged sectors in policy-making by ensuring that they are represented in the provincial development council. I advocated for gender-inclusion in program implementation such as livelihood development for women and gender-tagging in public procurement. My current appointment as Regional Director of the agency for housing and human settlements has placed me in a position to implement initiatives for community organizing and development, and empowerment of homeowners' associations, where many women serve as officers, to become active partners of the government in nation-building. In 2020, I was honoured to be a resource speaker and shared my experiences about 'Women Taking the Lead in Integrity-Building to Shape the Better Normal' ●

*"I made it my personal mission to contribute to reducing poverty using integrity-building as a platform"*



## Elizabeth Colquhoun

Senior Member of the Commercial and Contract Management Team for the Nuclear business within Babcock.

Location: UK

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I joined the commercial team at the beginning of my career and worked through some very challenging times in the UK defence market. I was initially focused on the drafting of terms and conditions and ensuring that the contracts delivered were clear and deliverable whilst also ensuring the business received real benefit.

I progressed through the commercial team and moved into the strategic solutions area of the business which focused on long-term customer relationships and strategic benefits for the UK in defence contracting.

I have always developed highly effective commercial teams and one of the tools used consistently is the training and support available through the World Commerce & Contracting programmes. I am known for effective leadership and the development of commercial delivery and creating a high-performance culture for our teams.

I have recently been responsible for one sector's Commercial Graduate Scheme, providing continued support and mentorship as required to our newest graduates joining the business. I was also able to co-author the Aston University MSc Risk and Governance module.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### Leadership

I take great pride in the development of the commercial and contract professionals I have had the pleasure to work with. I am most proud of the successes that a few of the team who have joined as graduates have gone on to achieve, now leading as Commercial Directors or delivering strategically important contracts for the UK defence industry. I have been able to give a good grounding in the basics of commercial and contract matters and encourage curiosity and an outward mindset to ensure that effective and productive relationships are developed, which ultimately delivers successful outcomes.

### Making a positive difference

I am a great believer in understanding the requirements of the customer, and ensuring that the business is positioned to assist and develop commercial strategies with the customer, in advance of formal negotiations. This approach has ensured that the business is easy to contract with, and that negotiations are much more focused, and that the solution delivered is accepted and owned by both parties.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

The pandemic has been challenging for us all and the business has changed beyond recognition, adopting agile working practises and support for all our teams. With such a diverse team – from young commercial graduates living in shared houses away from home, and parents with not only childcare responsibilities but also other family member carer responsibilities – it has been essential that I understand their individual personal circumstances to ensure we can continue their development and engagement in the business whilst maintaining delivery objectives.

The women in my team have sometimes struggled with home schooling and caring obligations and have previously not freely spoken about their roles and responsibilities outside of work. The pandemic has enabled me to understand the daily challenges faced by everyone in my team, and adapt and establish a new norm for working practises to enable flexibility and true acceptance of the challenges we all face. Whether that is being able to do the school runs or support medical appointments, the team now feel truly agile and talk openly without any hesitation about their needs in the new way of working.

It has and will continue to be essential to keep connected with one another and maintain some of the positive changes that have been forced by the pandemic but have delivered some real positive benefits for us all ●

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*“I take great pride in the development of the commercial and contract professionals I have had the pleasure to work with”*



## Teju Deshpande

Principal at Deloitte.  
Location: Chicago, USA

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I am an engineer by background, but I got involved in legal business services and specifically contract management solutions, when I co-founded a legal outsourcing company in 2001. I have been involved with contract lifecycle management since then and have had the opportunity to work with clients, technology, and services partners to deliver innovative solutions to their contract management challenges.

I recently joined Deloitte's Legal Business Services practice. I focus on helping clients transform their contract management technology, operations, and business processes.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### **Innovation and entrepreneurship**

I was a co-founder at one of the first alternative legal services providers (Mindcrest) and helped grow and scale the business. I helped build out the contract

lifecycle management practice at Morae Global. I launched Oya Solutions, a boutique consulting firm focused on innovative contract management solutions. There, we developed a number of accelerators, blueprints, and solutions for both mid-market and enterprise clients.

### **Supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion**

I've always been passionate about supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Deloitte's recruiting efforts are centred around identifying diverse talent and future leaders. We strive for an experience that is meaningful to people of all backgrounds – one that enables them to show up authentically, grow to their full potential, and live a purposeful life.

We continue to invest heavily in innovative ways to connect with talent from a variety of backgrounds and experiences and help address common obstacles such as tuition and certification support. This includes:

- MADE, a \$75 million commitment to generate more advisory, auditing, and tax career opportunities for the next generation of professionals through both financial support and Deloitte's resources.
- Tax Scholars encourages diversity in accounting and tax by granting scholarships to students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

At Oya Solutions, we also focused on diversity and inclusion as a key criterion for recruiting, promoting, and retaining talent. 75–80% of the team comprised of diverse professionals from a variety of backgrounds. Over 60% were women. We actively worked with organizations focused on identifying and training diverse, under-served communities to source talent.

- We provided internships for college students with diverse backgrounds. Our interns had the chance to speak with women and racially / ethnically diverse leaders in contract management to learn about their background, educational experiences, career choices, challenges, and to get advice.
- We supported organizations serving women and racially / ethnically diverse professionals through sponsorships, donations, and volunteering.
- We worked with leading women and minority owned / led contract management and law department consulting organizations to jointly deliver services.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

I have supported women and families in these ways:

- *Flexibility and autonomy:* At Deloitte, we have a culture of supporting each other, our clients, and our communities, even when there are many uncertainties around us. Deloitte's remote work policy and flexibility allow for more work / life fit, providing professionals the autonomy to manage client engagements and personal priorities.

- *Support:* Throughout the pandemic, I have made an effort to provide support to my team members, by having regular check ins, and stepping up to take on extra work or share projects and client deliverables, and assisting with managing internal and client expectations. Teaming together, supporting one another, and listening to the needs of my team members are important steps in navigating the challenges we have all experienced.
- *Coaching and mentoring:* The pandemic has been a pivotal event that has redefined the way we work, interact socially at work and outside of work, care for our families and communities. Now when I connect with people, we discuss common challenges that come with remote work, uncertainty around regulations and mandates, and the impact on their families. Helping professionals define priorities, life, and career goals, define their meaning of success, and build relationships and strong networks has been an important area of focus in these sessions ●

*“We strive for an experience that is meaningful to people of all backgrounds – one that enables them to show up authentically, grow to their full potential, and live a purposeful life”*



## Kanan Dhru

Senior Lecturer in Legal Technology at The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THUAS) and co-founder, Lawtoons.  
Location: Netherlands

Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?

I have been developing and researching innovative solutions in the legal space for over 15 years. As a practicing lawyer, I have argued cases for clients; started and headed a think-tank on legal and political reforms called Research Foundation for Governance in India (RFGI); developed Lawtoons – a pioneering comic book series for children that simplify laws; consulted elected representatives on drafting of laws; and most recently, led a community of stakeholders working towards legal innovation worldwide at the Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (HiIL). In my most recent profile, I teach legaltech and legal design to graduate students. Through these different experiences and endeavours to make laws and legal processes efficient and accessible, I have been able to get a better understanding of legal systems across the world. I have realised how there is almost a global need for developing better ways to communicate laws and improving relationships. The world of commerce and contracting is no exception.

Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.

### Leadership

I grew up in Ahmedabad – where Mahatma Gandhi worked tirelessly for India's freedom. His ideals and his life have left a deep impact on me. The fact that even Gandhi was a lawyer, was one of my inspirations to take up the same profession – especially looking at how much it helped him bring a change in the society. His famous quote “Be the change you wish to see”, is something I take to heart.

I have taken the initiative where I thought change was required – may it be starting RFGI to understand how legal systems simplify access to justice, or founding Lawtoons, or starting the Legal Hackers community in India. I have always questioned the status quo and taken leadership to work around creating solutions to bring about a change.

### Innovation

I am fascinated with how law and technology interact and the role legal design can play in scaling people-centred solutions. I have been fortunate to work with some fantastic people across continents in making innovative ideas in law and justice come alive. Qualities of developing the moral courage to lead and to develop effective solutions that serve the needs of people are the areas where I seek to contribute the most.

Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?

Women supporting women can change the world. I believe strongly in making sure women around me succeed in their professional aspirations, especially since the pandemic has increased the need for helping women achieve their potential in the world where inequalities continue to grow. At HiIL, I contributed towards supporting other women achieve their professional aspirations through the Diversity Equality and Inclusion committee.

I am also a part of the FEM-START community in the Netherlands, supporting female entrepreneurs. I regularly coach and support younger colleagues, students of all genders at my university, as well as young women applying for higher education or as they make employment applications. As a legal professional, I often get approached by women seeking legal support and I help and support them as and when I can with addressing their concerns ●

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*“Women supporting women can change the world”*





## Margaret Gibson

Head of Supplier Commercial Management at Metro Bank.  
Location: Edinburgh, Scotland

**Q:** What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?

I was born in Dundee. My father was a telecommunications engineer and my mother, a shorthand typist. Both my parents were smart and, when in her teens, my mother won a scholarship to attend college. This was in the 1940s and, with eight other siblings, she had to leave college before completing her qualification as her parents relied on her to contribute to the household income. She did this without question and went on to be successful in many different roles and businesses. My mother taught me to be resilient and to challenge myself every day to be the very best and kindest version of myself. She encouraged me to go to university where I studied Business, going on to study for an MBA. On completion of my studies, I went on to be a buyer of electrical components (an ominous start to my commercial journey) and have progressed my procurement and contracting career over 30 years across a range of sectors from engineering to pharmaceuticals to financial services.

**Q:** Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.

### Leadership and inspiring others

I asked three former colleagues to provide me with a narrative for my skills. This is what they wrote:

“Margaret has been passionately encouraging others to be the best they can be, since before it became mainstream to do so. She has a real talent for seeing potential in those who have not been born into privilege, herself coming from modest beginnings, and giving them a hand up to achieve their hopes and dreams. Not only that, but she also truly cares about the people she works with. During Covid, with some of the people (and their family members) in her function being ill, she was proactive in sending get-well cards, and hampers, sweets for their children, to let them know they were valued and missed. With her extensive range of expertise in her field, working for her is hugely rewarding from a career viewpoint, with each day bringing new learnings. There is nothing that fazes her, she always has the answers to whatever life / work throws at her. She encourages people to think big, and be bold, to do something which challenges them. Across all of this, she injects an element of fun and laughter. Those lucky enough to be mentored

by Margaret will find they are encouraged to push themselves outside their comfort zone, and feel confident and empowered to go for it. During her career, she has truly created life-changing experiences for the people she has worked with. She has been an advocate for social mobility for over 30 years.”

*Vikki Harrower, Barclays*

“When Margaret joined the company, she quickly secured investment in both people and technology and this demonstrated to me the value she placed on governance and risk management. Investment in the function is something I value highly which renewed my sense of optimism in our team. Margaret spends an incredible amount of time with team members on an individual basis both on work-related matters but also on personal matters offering support and guidance. Margaret’s energy, enthusiasm, and knowledge in the areas of Procurement and Supplier Relationship Management were quickly evident and she was able to change the views of senior executives across the organisation to that of a procurement function that delivers real value. She did this by demonstrating her knowledge, offering support, and sharing her vision – all things Margaret excels at. I am delighted to work for someone I can learn from, is like-minded in many ways, and values both myself, my team, and the work we deliver.”

*Grant Newman, Coventry Building Society*

“Margaret and I have worked together for over four years and she has been an inspiration. She has a wealth of knowledge in the procurement world and is happy to share her experience, visions and above all she encourages us to be the best we can be. Noticing my potential and enthusiasm but reluctance to take the first steps into unknown territory, Margaret suggested I shadow her to expand my knowledge and understanding of the function. I got to see not only how she manages a large procurement department

but how she used her own personal skills to her advantage. Margaret’s people skills are excellent – she knows just how far to push the boundaries and bring out the best in people, her encouragement and honesty makes her the influential woman she is. Not only is Margaret a great influence, but she is one of the most inspiring women I’ve had the pleasure to work with, aspire to, and most of all, call my friend.”

*Lesley Murray, DXC*

**Q:** The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?

Throughout the pandemic, I have ensured that I have taken time to check in with everyone in my team to understand the challenges and pressures they are under and tried to accommodate any changes to ways of working that they request. The pandemic has taken its toll on everyone but on a positive note, it has allowed me to encourage people to re-evaluate what matters most to them and focus on attaining a healthy balance to life, family, career, and work in general ●

*“Margaret has been passionately encouraging others to be the best they can, since before it became mainstream to do so”*



## Lea Gimenez

Board Member, Open Contracting Partnership and Former Minister of Finance of Paraguay.  
Location: Paraguay

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

My current role is Strategic Advisor to the Board of BASA Bank. Previously, I served as Finance Minister of Paraguay and led the National Economic Team. In both instances, I was the first female to do so. Through my work, I established and presided over the Technical Tax Commission of Paraguay. I have also led the Excellence Fund for Education of Paraguay and the National Financial Inclusion Strategy Commission. Prior to that, I served as Deputy Minister of Economy (again the first female to do so).

At the international level, I served as Division Chief of Innovation in Citizen Services (ICS) at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (again the first female to do so). Here I oversaw a portfolio of projects aimed at enabling innovation in government structures and public management models that facilitate inclusive economic development, increase investment and productivity, and help boost citizens'

confidence in government. I also worked as an Economist in the Poverty and Macro-Fiscal Global Practices of the World Bank.

I was the first minister in Paraguay to implement official accountability events ('rendición de cuentas') across the national territory and was actively involved in the implementation of several tools and programs to facilitate access to information and improve transparency, public sector efficiency, and citizen participation. I promoted the establishment of the first agreement between the Ministry of Finance and the Supreme Court of Electoral Justice of Paraguay that sought greater transparency and accountability regarding the financing of political parties. On behalf of the country, I signed the Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters, making Paraguay the 119th jurisdiction to adopt the world's leading instrument for boosting transparency, battling cross-border tax evasion, and promoting healthy financial flows. I also led the preparation of an evidence-based comprehensive reform package, the first of its kind in the country's history, which was approved in 2019.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

I am a naturally horizontal leader and believe that to 'get things done' people must be motivated, must be treated fairly and with respect, and must know that their contributions are important for achieving the team's overarching goals. Transparency, integrity, and inclusion are central to my leadership style. I have had the opportunity to mentor several women, as well as men, throughout my career. Many of the qualified women whom I appointed as directors while at the Vice Ministry of Economy are today leading several ministries and public institutions.

I can say that countless numbers of women, of all ages, have approached me to ask me for mentorship and guidance in their careers, and have thanked me for showing them that women are equally as capable as men to lead economic institutions, finances, and other male dominated fields, and be successful at it. I am delighted to say that, despite encountering great opposition from my superiors and against all odds, I successfully proposed and defended the promotions of a female leader to the highest technical grade at the IDB.

With regards to bravery, I feel very proud to be recognized as a Minister who did not hesitate to do the right thing and reported corruption when it was suspected and substantiated with evidence. I reported corruption that happened within the Ministry I was leading and corruption that happened at a public enterprise level which involved up to 40 public servants. I also confronted several, and unfortunately 'usual', illegitimate scenarios with integrity, even when that came at a significant personal cost. I am very proud of having done the right thing.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

At the IDB, under my leadership, we strengthened the gender and inclusion angles of our operational work, working hand in hand with the Gender Division. In the area of citizen security, my team promoted actions to prevent, address, and reduce domestic violence. In addition, projects with law enforcement agencies and prisons emphasized the importance of promoting both the participation and the leadership of women in public security. In the area of public sector management, my team worked to promote gender equality in public administration institutions, including the implementation of policies related to non-discrimination, equal pay, and equal access to managerial positions. We also promoted actions to ensure that the Center of Government priorities in gender equality are reflected in public programs and budgeting, as well as to ensure that its monitoring systems collect and analyze data disaggregated by sex. More recently, while at the IDB, I had the chance to lead the implementation of high-level regional dialogues on issues related to domestic violence and human trafficking in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic ●

*“Under my leadership, my team promoted actions to prevent, address, and reduce domestic violence”*



# Trinidad Inostroza

Consultant specializing in Gender and Public Procurement for the Inter-American Development Bank and Open Contracting.  
Location: Chile

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I am a specialist in Law and Public Management. My background includes a Bachelor's Degree in Law and a Master's Degree in Public Law. Currently I am a lecturer in anti-corruption and public procurement at several universities in Chile and Colombia.

For 14 years I led the institution in charge of Chile's public procurement system, ChileCompra. During the first years I was head of the legal division, in charge of regulation and compliance, and the last five years I was appointed as National Director. More than 12 billion dollars a year are traded through the system, by more than 850 Chilean public institutions and more than 60,000 suppliers.

During my tenure I modified the rules governing the Chilean procurement system to strengthen integrity, transparency, and sustainable procurement, promoting equal opportunities, and inclusion to allow greater participation of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and women-led companies in public procurement.

I launched a program to increase the participation of women entrepreneurs in the public procurement market (with financial support from Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) – Multilateral Investment Fund), as a key public policy to promote women's economic empowerment. A three-year action plan was deployed, including mentoring, training buyers and suppliers, face-to-face and online courses, and communication campaigns, with a strong emphasis on social media.

The Women's Label was also created to identify and certify women-led businesses. As a result of the actions to promote greater participation of women, the amounts traded by women-led companies rose by 25% within the Chilean public procurement system.

I also implemented the Open Data Standard in the procurement system and promoted new models of collaborative purchasing, achieving significant savings for the State.

Under my administration ChileCompra received the following awards: United Nations Public Service Award for the Initiative Women-Led Companies Through Public Market (2019); Women's Community Award (Premio Comunidad Mujer) for contribution to

the economic empowerment of women in Chile (2017); recognition from the Social Organizations Division for promoting citizen participation (2016); RIGG Innovation Award for Open Data Policy (2015); RIGG Innovation Award for Procurement Observatory (2014).

From 2016 to 2018 I was elected as the President of the Inter-American Network of Government Procurement. My approach in the position was to promote the incorporation of women in public procurement, and the use of open data to promote transparency and integrity. The formalisation of the IGPN was also one of my objectives, and its official recognition was declared during the Organization of American States General Assembly in 2016.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

Leadership is about maximizing the collective efforts of everyone toward the achievement of a collective goal. Throughout my career I have always made an effort to be a leader in this space. Supporting diversity and inclusion is a big part of being a successful leader.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

Given the high volumes of resources traded in public procurement, representing up to 30% of public spending in Latin America, it is an important market. Countries' trade is a key component of public policies that support the empowerment of women.

In a pandemic context, in which female employment has been strongly affected, public procurement can undoubtedly become a strategic tool to promote the participation of under-represented groups in the economies, such as SMEs and women.

From my role as a consultant and based on my experience in ChileCompra, I have supported projects for the incorporation of women in public procurement in other Latin American countries. I supported the Public Procurement Department of the Buenos Aires city government (Argentina) in the creation of the Sello Mujer (Women's Seal) to identify women entrepreneurs participating in public procurement. As a consultant for the IDB, I supported the Honduras's Legal Office for Procurement and Acquisitions (Oficina Normativa de Contratación y Adquisiciones) in a project aimed at incorporating women in public procurement. Also, I supported local governments in Colombia to incorporate the gender approach in public procurement, thanks to Open Contracting Partnership ●

*“My approach was to promote the incorporation of women in public procurement, and the use of open data to promote transparency and integrity”*



## Electra Japonas

Founder and CEO of TLB and co-founder of oneNDA.  
Location: London, UK

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I grew up in Cyprus, moving to England to study law and then a Master's in International Business Law, before beginning my first graduate role at the European Space Agency in the Netherlands.

I spent the next ten years as an in-house lawyer, working across Europe for Airbus, Disney and Ernst & Young, negotiating and managing contracts with start-ups and small businesses. It struck me time and time again how smaller businesses lacked the legal and commercial support they needed. I realised there was clearly a gap in the market for a legal company that took a more holistic approach to legal support. So I founded TLB.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### **Innovation and entrepreneurship**

Through founding TLB, the world's first legal optimisation company, I brought innovation, design-thinking and strategy to the legal sphere, creating a business that is truly going to make a difference in the way people experience, expect, and deliver legal support.

Challenging the status-quo is an occupational hazard at TLB. And in 2021 we brought together over 1,200 lawyers to create an open-sourced, standardised Non-Disclosure Agreement. To date there has been very little collaboration in the legal industry, and I wanted to change that. oneNDA has proved that the legal community can band together and create standards that we can all agree to agree on.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

As a company founded and led by women, we foster a culture of openness and collaboration, where failure is not a bad thing but a necessary part of getting something right.

Creating an environment where team members can voice their thoughts, concerns and share ideas is essential for innovation and something that sadly is not entirely a given in all workplaces, especially for women. It is a key team value of ours. We allow flexible working to cater to the mothers in our team and work on clear goals and objectives so people can grow and progress within the organisation. ●

*“I created a business that is truly going to make a difference in the way people experience, expect, and deliver legal support”*



## Lizzy Kuoth

Leader, Adviser, Multicultural, Refugee Experience, Inclusion, Community and Youth Engagement.  
Location: Melbourne, Australia

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I have been involved in the community sector for over ten years and I offer invaluable insight into bridging the gap between good business and resilient communities. In the last four years alone, as a Community Member of the Inner Southeast Metropolitan Partnership, I was involved in engaging the wider community and multicultural organizations to identify important social, economic, and environmental challenges and opportunities to be put forward as advice to the Victorian State Government. I played an integral role in ensuring young people's voices were heard and have facilitated opportunities for their perspectives to be captured across all Metropolitan Partnerships.

I have been working as Inclusion and Capability Officer at the Level Crossings Removal project (LXRP) for the past three years. During this time, I have been providing incredible value to the sector by coordinating and delivering an inclusion capability program with industry and community peak

partners, including providing them with resource guides, recommendations for training providers, delivering events and awareness-raising activities and materials. I also coordinated the Women in Transport (WiT) mentoring program. These are typically projects lasting anywhere from weeks to six months. I am proud that the mentoring program grew in numbers and attracted participants from across transport and rail, both private businesses and government and with a high engagement rate.

Prior to working at LXRP, I worked with the City of Greater Dandenong council on a casual basis facilitating community engagement activities for young people and their families. In addition to this, I worked at St Francis Xavier Collage, delivering, and implementing programs and events to build cultural awareness and drive social cohesion with families and the school. I have an Advanced Diploma of Justice and I am currently completing a Bachelor of Business and Economics part-time. I hold various professional certifications including the Women's Board Leadership Program, Prevention of Violence Against Women in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities, and Youth Mental Health First Aid.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### Supporting diversity and inclusion

I have been a dedicated youth leader and human rights activist since 2008 and support diversity and inclusion by representing the voices of culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Victoria as a Victorian Multicultural Commissioner. My passion for community service has been inspired by my own lived experiences in Australia and internationally, experiences which give me a great empathy for those who have fought to overcome hardship in their life. For many culturally and linguistically diverse communities, the lack of access to resources and power has great impact on their livelihood and keeps them marginalised. I remember back in 2008, as a founding member of a youth advisory group at Noble Park, focusing on addressing substance abuse and homelessness impacting young people from African backgrounds, we learned how challenging it was for those young people to receive help. We were able to provide safe spaces for them, such as inviting them over for a barbecue, introducing them to staff members, as well as advocating on their behalf to service providers and to local councils to do more. It was great to see some of them choosing to come to the community centre to access the support they needed to improve their lives, but it all started with them feeling welcomed and that there was genuine concern for their wellbeing. My passion is helping other refugees overcome enormous challenges to build a great life in Australia and contribute to communities. As a public speaker, working with the Refugee Council of Australia, I share my own refugee story of fleeing war-torn South Sudan with my grandma and three young brothers, only to be stuck in Egypt for four years before arriving in Melbourne in 2005.

I also support diversity and inclusion through my work in the transport sector and working as Student Ambassador for Swinburne University encouraging people from refugee backgrounds to pursue higher education.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

I have had the privilege of coordinating the WiT mentoring program, which facilitates growth and knowledge-transfer and drives the increased capability of women in transport. It helps women set and progress their professional goals, strengthen their industry connections and support life-long learning. The program is part of the State Government's WiT initiative; a \$6 million package of initiatives and business improvements led by Victoria's Department of Transport. I also mentor young African students at Monash University, where one of my mentees', Aisha Hassan was recently selected to join the Anti-Racism Taskforce, a Victorian government initiative to drive social change ●

*"My passion is helping other refugees overcome enormous challenges to build a great life in Australia and contribute to communities"*



## Jamilya Mariceva

Founder, Editor in Chief at ProTenge.  
Location: Kazakhstan

Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?

I have been working as a journalist for 18 years, writing about corruption for many years. In March 2020, I created my project @ProTenge.kz on Instagram, where I write about public procurement and corruption in Kazakhstan. Now we have 68,000 followers on our Instagram page. I have managed to create a community of Kazakhstanis who care about what their taxes are spent on. During the project's work we have cancelled dozens of suspicious public procurement cases worth over 500,000 dollars. We are trying to involve more and more citizens in the process of public control. Our main task is to tell the complex budgetary processes in a very simple way to make them understandable.

Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.

My team and I have become trendsetters in Kazakhstan, we have inspired other journalists and other communities. We have shown by example that budgets can be talked about in an interesting way, that difficult topics such as corruption and public procurement can garner thousands of likes and reposts. We have proved that thousands of reposts can be a reason for inspections and cancellation of dishonest public procurements.

It is now very fashionable to discuss budgets on social media, and this is what we are doing our project for. We have shown a lot of people by our example that even in a corrupt country like Kazakhstan you can change the situation for the better with simple resources.

Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?

This is a very simple question for me, because in my team of ten employees, there are nine talented and hardworking women and one talented and hardworking man. My entire project has come to fruition in large part because of the contribution of women. Women have flown on business trips, women have done and filmed investigative journalism, women have worked with audiences of thousands of people every day to ensure our growth. Without women, our project would not exist ●

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*“We have shown a lot of people that even in a corrupt country you can change the situation for the better with simple resources”*



## Iruka A. Ndubuizu

Executive Director at Eureka Consulting, LLC.  
Location: Nigeria

Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?

I am a negotiations expert, speaker, and trainer whose experience spans law firms, corporations, and academia. I am also a trained mediator experienced in conflict resolution and a savvy contract negotiator proficient in drafting, reviewing, negotiating, and administering various types of contracts and agreements. I believe a lot of problems can be avoided if you have a good contract in place. Contracting is basically converting business terms into legal concepts. With my legal background, I use the law proactively to achieve better business results, balance risks and prevent problems.

Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.

### Supporting diversity and inclusion

I have been a member of World Commerce & Contracting for several years and noticed the lack of representation of people of colour both in the programs offered and in leadership. I expressed this concern every chance I had in both conversations and feedback / surveys received after conferences. I was very glad when the role of Council Members was introduced. This provided a unique opportunity to network and create programs that are relevant to specific geographical areas. I was one of the first Council Members in the African Region which gave me a platform to engage with contracting professionals in the region to share experiences and challenges.

### Making a positive difference

The infant mortality rate in Nigeria is higher than most countries. Every year, millions of new moms watch their infants die from preventable illnesses. With the high cost of healthcare, it is common for people who need medical attention to delay their care. To facilitate the reduction of death caused by preventable medical conditions in underserved communities, I started a campaign to raise funds to provide free medical health supplies and equipment. Through the generosity of several donors, I was able to raise enough funds to procure a 40-foot container of medical supplies and equipment valued at over \$250,000 and have it shipped from the United States to Imo State University Teaching Hospital (IMSUTH) in Nigeria. IMSUTH is a primary healthcare facility that caters to a large population of the community and a teaching hospital responsible for training future medical practitioners. Unfortunately, it is not equipped to carry out its basic functions due to lack of funding. In a country where 67% of people live below the poverty line, many people are dying from preventable health conditions daily. Providing IMSUTH with the supplies and equipment went a long way in alleviating the healthcare needs of the most vulnerable members of our society.

Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?

I wear many hats. In one of my organizations, I mentor young women and help them with both professional and personal development. I believe it is important to give them the tools they need to prepare for a leadership role or just being successful in their current role ●

*“To facilitate the reduction of death caused by preventable medical conditions in underserved communities, I started a campaign to raise funds to provide free medical health supplies and equipment”*



# Funkola Odeleye

Co-founder at DIYLaw.  
Location: UK

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I am a trained lawyer, and I was called to the Nigerian Bar in 2009; I am also registered to practice law in the United Kingdom as a Registered Foreign Lawyer. My career has included law firm practice in corporate-commercial teams and in-house legal and compliance functions in investment banking.

My entire career has pretty much seen me being involved in the world of commerce and contracting by virtue of my training, especially working on complex transactions. However, in 2014, I made the switch to provide legal advisory to small and medium enterprises as I realised that they were an underserved and unfairly disadvantaged market. Small business owners can rarely afford lawyers and therefore sign contracts without seeking legal advice. In many cases, this leaves them bound to terms that stifle their growth and success and the fighting chance they have is to at least understand the meaning of the documents they are signing.

To solve this problem, I co-founded a company to simplify legal services and documents specifically targeted at small business owners and to also make it affordable for and accessible to them.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### **Innovation and entrepreneurship**

In my mission to make legal services and documents affordable and accessible at scale, I had to employ innovation, and this led me down the path of launching a legal technology company. For a lawyer who was a general user of technology, I had to learn a lot on-the-go about technology, product development and how to commoditise legal services. There weren't many examples, especially in Africa, at the time we launched DIYLaw in 2015 so it is no surprise that we were often referred to as "disruptive", "innovative" or "forerunners". We have also been fortunate to be recognised globally, been shortlisted for, and won several innovation awards.

### **Leadership**

Over the years, we occupied the vantage position of being one of the first to do it and with that came the responsibility (internally and externally) of showing that it is possible to make quality legal services affordable, to simplify contracts so that more and more people are encouraged to document their business arrangements and make them fair.

Personally, I have taken every opportunity that presents itself, to get more lawyers on the side of simplifying legal services and documents; I have spoken at the United Nations Science, Technology and Innovation Forum, Nigerian Bar Association Conference, the Lagos Economic Summit and been a part of a working group on User Friendly Contracts convened by the Hague Institute for the Innovation of Law, to name a few.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

The pandemic has indeed been a gift and a curse. I consider the illumination of the inequalities suffered by women to be a gift as more and more people are now aware of potential and peculiar setbacks that women go through. With this awareness, we can now start to proffer workable solutions to close these gaps in the most equitable ways.

Prior to the pandemic, I mentored women entrepreneurs via the Cherie Blair Foundation but with the pandemic I have realised that not many women will have the opportunity to go through formal mentoring processes or will even apply for opportunities, considering the increased burden of childcare and even job loss for some. I have reengineered my approach and whilst I still provide mentoring in structured programs, I now close the gap in various ways and pass the baton in more informal settings. I offer to help women review their applications for programmes, funding and even jobs. I share opportunities, open up my network and offer introductions to help make seemingly impossible connections easier. Most of all, I celebrate women; one woman's win is a beacon of hope to so many ●

*“One woman’s win is a beacon of hope to so many”*





# Pina Palermo

Commercial Director, Air & Space at QinetiQ Limited.  
Location: UK

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

My career in contracting began 28 years ago when soon after I graduated in Economics and Statistics in Italy, I decided to visit London to learn the English language. I worked in temping roles before I joined EH Industry (later acquired by Leonardo) where I supported small value transactions. The commercial / contracts department intrigued me, and it seemed like the perfect job, the bridge across a multi-functional organisation, and a way to be involved in the end-to-end of any deal. I spent the next ten years growing my international contracting experience on Air and Maritime acquisitions and long-term support contracts, before transitioning to a senior managerial position in 2004. I became interested in how to shape, sell, and deliver profitable business through value models for both the customers and my organisation, and, how to contract the whole deal so that both party's business objectives are achieved. In 2008 I moved to the Middle East on a career sabbatical to join my husband, and joined a large IT organisation. The following nine years in the Middle East, made me a stronger leader and enriched my understanding

of how alternate cultural dynamics can affect contracting frameworks on an international stage.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### Raising the reputation of contracting

Commercial and Procurement activities, and the value of robust contracting mechanisms have historically been hugely misrepresented in the Middle East. Through my leadership and mentoring, I successfully demonstrated that, through the application of mature contracting principles, the business could demonstrate to customers the value of strategic procurement initiatives which led to repeat sales, and the business being seen as a value-added partner. Over time, the Commercial and Procurement function was viewed as a leading function to drive cost out of the business, increase sales, and maximise return within the contracts. The function went from being viewed as a buying department where tactical purchases are made on an ad-hoc basis to meet an immediate need, to being central to the decision-making process within the business where strategic contracts add value and increase revenues, whilst saving costs for the customer.

### Supporting diversity and inclusion

A desire for change, raised awareness, and women championing other women, can progress culture and force points on gender inequality. In any organisation that I have worked with, in various countries and different cultures, I have created an environment, which promotes individual creativity and ownership to deliver a solid and consistent performance. As a member of QinetiQ's Gender Balance Network, I collaborate on strategic initiatives that invest in our employees to create better engagement, coaching and mentoring programmes.

I am part of the Women in Defence UK Community and few months ago I became an LGBTQ+ Ally because I am not from a group who suffers discrimination and therefore, I feel passionate that I can provide support to those who need it. I always aim to create a safe environment where everyone is recognised for their contribution, encouraged, and supported to express their ideas and where everyone has freedom to work in their own way. I have always had a focus on people, development, and motivations, because I have learned that anyone can achieve goals and aspirations through resilience and passion and strengths. Being an Ally at work, allows me to provide a path to foster positive inter-group connections and build a more positive workplace culture.

My hope is that sometime, soon, we do not use gender identity, race, or anything else as a matter that needs to be discussed, rather we can celebrate people for what they are, each day of our lives.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role**

**have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

I am very proud of my career and what I have been able to accomplish, especially since my life-changing experience in the Middle East where I have had the opportunity to coach and mentor talents to develop a high-performance culture. I transformed the Commercial and Procurement function to grow the business in a challenging IT environment, and as part of the journey, I have built capabilities within the business. I have pioneered relationships between my IT organisation and the Princess Noura University, contributing to their training programme, and as a result, I have increased numbers of female professionals in a range of disciplines, including in a commercial and procurement environment, and was honoured by HRH Princess Hessah Bint Salman AlSaud for enhancing the role of Saudi women and their impact in the local economy. Since being back in the UK I have continued to promote women empowerment and as a mentor, advisor, and line manager, I continue to attract women who are looking for support to enhance their skills and progress their careers. I currently lead a talented, diverse team with expertise in all aspects of the contracting process and I have the privilege of leading and mentoring various skilful women in my organisation. Despite the COVID crisis I have endeavoured to promote and continue to support aspirational achievements ●

*“I have enhanced the role of Saudi women and their impact in the local economy”*



## Laura Perry

Commercial Director at Boeing.  
Location: Bristol, UK

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I am currently the Commercial Director for Boeing UK responsible for all Defence and National Security Divisions within the UK. I lead a team of 40–50 estimating and pricing, and commercial specialists working closely with finance, legal and supply chain functions. I started my professional career within the sales and commercial team at Horstman Defence after completing my Bachelor's degree in Sport and Exercise Science at the University of Bath. After four years I moved to Bristol and joined Boeing in 2014 as Head of Commercial for the National Security and Defence Services division, before holding roles as Finance Manager, Head of Estimating & Pricing and Senior Business Manager for Vertical Lift and Fixed Wing Divisions. In this time, I have also joined Cranfield University and attended the Defence Acquisition Management Course held at Shrivenham and achieved WorldCC Commercial and Contract Management Advanced Practitioner status.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### **Promoting diversity and inclusion**

In many ways I have led a very privileged life, although being a gay female I understand the need to overtly promote a diverse and inclusive environment from both a personal and professional perspective. Like many I have had some negative homophobic experiences and it is probably only within the last few years that I have felt comfortable talking about my sexuality openly. I think the culture and team at Boeing has been a huge factor in this and is something I am very grateful for and am now looking to play a very active role within. My current and future involvement includes creating my diversity blueprints (and encouraging others to create their own), talking about my unique experiences to graduates, mentoring and taking part in GEDI (Gender, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) activities and events. Over the past year I have become increasingly aware of how important it is to maximise the opportunities you have within your leadership role to act as a role model and

promote those value which are important to you and to others who may not yet be feeling quite as confident. This is something I am very much looking forwards to building on throughout my career.

### **Raising the reputation of contracting**

Over the past year as a team, we have worked hard to ensure a 'seat at the table' and to ensure we are not simply viewed by the business as advisors but rather as a key part of the business and program teams. This means we as a team often play leading roles on program and / or financial issues which reach beyond that of a traditional contracts function. As a team we have placed a huge emphasis on relationships and stakeholder engagement both within and external to our business. Pro-actively seeking feedback and celebrating successes to improve the reputation of the Commercial function.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

Naturally gender equality has been something which has been a keen interest of mine for some time, specifically looking at ways we can remove the barriers surrounding the glass ceiling.

As a woman on Boeing Defence UK's senior leadership team, I take the opportunity to be an accessible and visible role model and provide mentorship and advocacy for younger women, especially for our apprentices, interns and graduates who are just starting out on their careers.

I frequently participate in, and contribute to Boeing's equity, diversity and inclusion discussions and resource groups that help to empower women at Boeing and give them a platform to be heard and inspire others.

I'm committed to creating a work environment and culture at Boeing that is mindful of women's individual needs and helps them be successful, providing feedback and areas for improvement on new policies that help drive retention and make Boeing an attractive place to work. For example, Boeing's flexible working policy, which has been introduced since the pandemic, has been very well received ●

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*"I take the opportunity to be an accessible and visible role model and provide mentorship and advocacy for younger women"*



# Elizabeth J. Reynoso

Associate Director at Living Cities.  
Location: USA

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

My career has spanned multiple fields over the last 20 years: human rights, media, local government, workforce development, farming, and philanthropy. I couldn't limit myself to advancing justice and sustainability in just one role or job. Then while working at the intersection of municipal innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem-building I was introduced to equitable contracting and purchasing, and I became obsessed with the power of procurement. I began to work with the country's best and brightest public sector leaders. My experience in local government as a purchaser and policy maker gives me the credibility to motivate procurement directors, chiefs of staff, purchasing directors and even city attorneys to take risks and put their values in their purchasing budgets. I use my journalist training to capture and tell stories to inspire local governments to take on inclusive procurement efforts.

I build the capacity of businesses owned by people of color and employers of color to compete for government contracts and grow their businesses. Together we test and prove the policies and practices that change how public dollars are spent locally and nationally.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### Leadership

As a young child I listened for and answered the call of service. At first in my Catholic parish community when I became the youngest lector, then in student government in high school and college where the school's motto is *Non Ministrari sed Ministrare*, 'not to be served, but to serve unto'. One calling has led me to improving food procurement. I volunteered as a big sister for a young girl whose father was incarcerated. Spending time with her led me to pursue a role in an organization helping people re-establish their lives when they came home from prison.

At this organization, I wanted to create jobs that helped to heal people and their environment, so I partnered with a local environmental education organization to provide part-time, transitional jobs to the men and women we served. Eventually this non-profit pilot program expanded to a budgeted city program serving the entire city. I am proud of the results which include the development of several acres of urban farmland, long-term jobs for men and women who were incarcerated, and farm-stands and fresh produce for communities experiencing the impacts of food apartheid.

### Inspiring and influencing others

I encourage people to steal. That's right. I've written dozens of blogs and have been asked to speak to national audiences about some of the courageous and innovative people I know – entrepreneurs and public servants. Over the last six years, I've seen promising practices tested out by one city, adopted and adapted to another city, all because I shared a story and that gave people inspiration to steal from one another.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

I take my role as a gatekeeper seriously. My connections, my information, and my endorsements have and can lead to game-changing investments and partnerships. Most significant to me, I have had the honor of creating opportunities for women of color to be recognized for their roles as entrepreneurs, founders, and impact investors.

Over the last four years, I've used my power to hire, to convene and create national conversations, and to promote stories to introduce and connect Black female venture capitalists and founders, Indigenous and Latina entrepreneurs to national audiences of major philanthropy, innovative public leaders, as well as global thought-leaders •

*“I have had the honor of creating opportunities for women of colour to be recognized for their roles as entrepreneurs, founders, and impact investors”*



## Sandra Sinde

PPI and Open Innovation Manager at IDOM.  
Location: Spain

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

My connection with public procurement began more than 20 years ago at the beginning of my professional career, when I was working for different public organizations advising projects of technological and innovative content. Subsequently, I made the leap from consulting in the private sector, to work in the field of innovation in the public sector. This is when I discovered the importance of public procurement.

For ten years I have been dedicated to promoting public procurement in different countries to use it as an innovation tool and promote real changes in public administrations. My passion for innovation and my knowledge of public procurement made me see the potential of Public Procurement of Innovation (PPI) and commit myself to its dissemination and implementation in Spain and Latin America.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

In ten years of professional experience in the world of PPI, I have stood out for leadership and capability-building in the public sector of different countries.

I would highlight the following as main achievements:

- I flew two and a half times the distance to the moon to train and raise awareness on innovation to more than 6,000 people from the public sector, with the slogan 'Another way to innovate is possible'.
- I managed the Technical Office of the most important PPI initiative in Europe, The Hospital 2050 and Innova Saude Health innovation plans and I was lucky to do it in my hometown – Santiago de Compostela, witnessing a big change in the health assistance model. Recently this project won the first place award in the category Innovation Procurement Strategy by EIC (EUIPAwards 2021).
- I created the first blog on PPI and open innovation at an international level.
- I worked with the first market consultations of PPI development in Spain, Mexico, Ecuador, Peru and Colombia.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

I have formed a team of professionals in my organization, in the field of PPI, with the majority participation of women, and I have participated in numerous events and webinars to promote the role of women in innovation and technology. See Women in Tech Day: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=itC9pmcMDJA&t=1105s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itC9pmcMDJA&t=1105s).

I have been included in the initiative of Galician female referents (<https://executivasdegalicia.org/bases-referentes>), a living inventory of women who, due to their trajectory and their worth, can be a role model to be followed by the rest of Galician women ●

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*“I provided training and raised awareness on innovation to more than 6,000 people from the public sector”*



## Luz Adriana Vásquez Trujillo

Open Government and Transparency Advisor to the Palmira Mayor's Office.  
Location: Colombia

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

My first professional experience was in the Office of the Attorney General of the Nation. This place was a school for me because I was able to approach public procurement in two ways: on the one hand, through my investigative work learning of the modalities of crimes against the Public Administration, and on the other, leading the purchasing area at regional level.

This opportunity allowed me to enter the world of public procurement and start dreaming of bigger reforms. That was how, years later, I joined the Administrative Reform of the Mayor's Office of Cali, creating and leading the first Administrative Department of Public Procurement. This was thanks to the support of the Mayor who always sought to empower women. Almost four years later, I joined the Mayor's Office of Palmira to serve as General Secretariat, and later as Open Government and Active Transparency Advisor, where I currently work. In both municipalities I implemented social clauses to promote the labor inclusion of women, heads of households, and people with disabilities – before the law established it in Colombia.

I have also worked hand in hand with business associations to promote the participation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the local public procurement market, and in training citizen overseers to exercise social control over contracting.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### **Raising the reputation of contracting**

When I started work as Public Procurement Director in the Cali Mayor's Office, I created a team of more than 90 professionals, of whom more than half had never worked for the government because they believed that being transparent and ethical was impossible. This was an opportunity to carry out an experiment of inclusion, vindicate public service, empower young professionals, and inspire them to change their city through public purchases. After three years of rewarding work, many of these professionals continued to serve their city. Some work in other entities promoting similar innovations, and some continue to be my base team to implement reforms in Palmira.

I have shown that it is possible to empower citizens, businessmen, and journalists. This is possible when public officials accept the challenge of teaching in

non-specialized language and promote the design of tools based on open data. Whenever I can, I teach that public procurement is not simply an administrative procedure or a method to combat corruption, but an excuse to innovate, empower and generate opportunities. I have implemented this with public officials, MSMEs and vendors, since I believe that the best way to transform the public procurement market is with a collaborative and participatory culture.

### **Supporting diversity and inclusion**

In my duties as a public servant, I cannot ignore my role as a woman. For this reason, I have structured and implemented policies for the inclusion of women in public procurement in the different municipalities in which I have worked.

I have been fortunate enough to successfully carry out different social inclusion strategies, where I have been able to use the power of public purchasing, without the need for additional resources, to open job opportunities and favor women heads of household who in Cali, face great difficulties to find a job. This has been possible thanks to the valuable work teams that I have been able to form.

Through the inclusion of social clauses in the largest acquisition of the Mayor's Office, I managed to help more than 100 women to get stable jobs for at least two years. The number of people who benefited was almost 400, since the households of these women had an average of four people, including children. Another result was the paradigm shift of companies in the private surveillance sector as they found benefits when hiring women, such as the opening of a new line of business to monitor educational and health institutions. The result of this experiment, and the knowledge generated was amazing, above all because it served for the National Agency for State Contracting to issue guidelines that promoted this type of innovation.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

Women have always shown positive leadership in the work teams that I have formed. This fills me with pride because I understand that, as a woman, it is essential to empower others because we do not always find environments where our voice and leadership are well received, even despite our enormous potential.

Currently, in the Mayor's Office of Palmira, I lead the project for the inclusion of rural producers in public purchases. Given that this municipality, which is 90% rural, has suffered an economic recession, there is a great need for farmers to be able to enter more stable markets with customers who can pay them on time and with fair prices. For this reason, together with my team, and international allies such as OCP and UN Women, we have developed an inclusion guideline so that at least 30% of the food that the Mayor's Office buys comes from the Palmira countryside ●

*“I had the opportunity to carry out an experiment of inclusion, vindicate public service, empower young professionals, and inspire them to change their city through public purchases”*



## Giorgia Vulcano

Global Digital Ethics Manager at AB inBev.  
Location: Belgium

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I started my professional career as a human rights lawyer, spending several years in Costa Rica, and then Chile, where I mainly worked on cases of human rights violations committed by military dictatorships. Many of the victims had suffered interference with their rights to privacy and freedom of opinion and expression, which often tragically cost them their lives. In this role I learned two valuable concepts that would change my path as a lawyer. The first was that, by working on cases of individuals who had been persecuted because of their opinions and what they believed in, I began understanding the implications and impact of privacy violations. The second was learning about the concept of empathy and particularly from a social perspective, as there is really nothing less empathetic than a dictatorship regime.

Whilst I was in Chile, I discovered that Chile is a pole of innovation in Latin America. I began working as both an in-house and an external counsel for different start-ups where the people I mainly interacted with were the CEOs, the developers, the marketing professionals, who were looking into creating something amazing and innovative and with a completely different language and mindset from the one I was normally exposed to. I found myself interacting with professionals with diverse and unusual perspectives and shifting from being an external advisor to becoming a team member and player. I had to rethink the way I communicated, and how I could best enable these start-ups to create value in a sustainable and human-centric way to remain relevant and active on the market. It was within this context that I saw design thinking and the agile methodology in their native environment, which triggered one of my latest projects, the Legal by Design Framework, an open-source, working tool meant to guide cross-functional teams in their collaboration and discussion processes and help them build and share a common language to make legal understandable to non-lawyers.

I later moved on to work as a legal counsel in global organizations like Deloitte and Coca-Cola, where I brought my experience in digital transformation and in co-designing legal solutions with the cross-functional teams to help unlock and enable a compliant and sustainable innovation at scale.

Currently, I am serving as a Global Digital Ethics Manager at AB inBev. In this role I focus, among other things, on the legal and ethical implications of existing and emerging technologies, applying legal design to remove silos within the business.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

As you can imagine, starting my career as a human rights lawyer, social value endeavours, such as ethics and sustainability have always been something I am passionate about. I have always aspired to inspire others to consider social value in their own professional and personal lives.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

During the pandemic I became a board member of Women@Privacy, which aims at bringing together privacy experts and enthusiasts to share, connect and engage on data protection and privacy topics.

With what was a group of five women, we created from scratch a platform that encourages the visibility and empowerment of female privacy professionals through events, knowledge and inspiration sharing, and mentorship programs (to which I also participate as a mentor). All completely remote and free, ensuring and enabling access to all. Our vision was to not only build a community where women could enhance their expertise and professional development, but also where they could discuss, inspire, and exchange with others in a safe and stimulating environment.

In addition to creating and sharing the Legal by Design Framework for others to immediately use and apply, I created a series of short videos and articles to create awareness around emerging concepts like Legal Design and bring a new perspective to the law ●

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*“We created a platform that encourages the visibility and empowerment of female privacy professionals”*



## Verity White

Founder at Checklist Legal.  
Location: Melbourne, Australia

### Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?

Verity found her love for the law and contracts later in life as a mature legal student. After completing an internship with a mid-sized telco company, she was invited to stay on as a paralegal – yes to finally get paid to do legal work! She enjoyed the fast pace of work and practical experience of in-house life.

As a junior lawyer, Verity was eager to help with more substantial contracts but found her time eaten away with contract admin. So, she decided to encourage the small legal team to adopt electronic signatures and from there her love affair with contracts really took off.

What started as just a productivity focus turned into a real passion as Verity started to explore plain language and visual contracting, attending conferences, and getting involved with communities across the world looking to improve contracts.

As an in-house lawyer, Verity could see the tangible benefits of re-designing contracts for readability and efficiency every day, and she was keen to learn more.

Verity started to test and create her own methods for re-designing contracts in a way that worked for a busy corporate world where automation and scale are important. This led to writing articles, blog posts, an eBook, as well as presenting at conferences and creating a podcast... generally about improving contracts!

Now Verity has created her own law firm, Checklist Legal, around creating amazing contracts for businesses to help them speed up the contract process and improve relationships with their clients.

### Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.

#### Inspiring and influencing others

Verity is extremely proud of the impact she was able to have at Telstra during her five years within the big legal team. With over 200 lawyers, the legal team is large and decisions can often be slow to happen, and changes are rarely proactive. Verity was able to bring her passion for contracting to several projects, but the most transformational would be the Dealer agreement re-design and the Digital Service Terms.

Both projects were true business grade agreements where visuals in a contract are rarely seen. Verity helped lead these projects and was able to re-invigorate these documents with improved structure and visual design. This led to positive outcomes both for the legal and commercial teams.

#### Innovation and entrepreneurship

Through work at her own law firm, Checklist Legal, Verity is helping both small businesses and legal teams to create better contracts. She has built her business around providing excellent client experience and part of the challenge of loving contracts meant there was a lot of pressure to create gorgeous contracts for her own business. That's when she knew she needed to call in some professionals for that extra impartial eye and she worked with WriteMark to have her legal engagement documents WriteMark certified.

Verity was able to launch her law firm as a side hustle to her corporate lawyer role by providing something different – contracts that look great and a focus on client care.

Eager to bring designers and lawyers together, Verity applied to take part in Melbourne Design Week to present an interactive Contract Design Workshop. The team held the event between various lockdowns and received fantastic feedback from all participants, 100% said they would like to attend a future workshop.

Also in 2021, Verity became an Honorary Senior Fellow at the University of Melbourne where she was invited to present an innovation subject for the Law Master's program, teaching Contract Design for Automation. This too was a successful new area, with younger students and more experienced professionals gaining many new skills and providing positive feedback about the newly created subject.

### Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?

Verity's law firm is in the process of applying for B Corp certification and is basing its impact business model program around supporting women in business, as well as measuring supplier diversity.

Checklist Legal's clients are purpose-led businesses. 60% are female-owned or co-owned. And more than 75% of suppliers are female or co-owned businesses.

Verity believes:

- that businesses (and especially law firms!) must take a central role in creating and demonstrating best practice in user design and sustainability
- that thoughtfully designed contracts improve the confidence and quality of life for business owners and make businesses better places to work in and with
- that we can all create client-centric, balanced business models that build measurable benefits and positive impact on all sides of the supply chain
- that females in business and the legal industry are ready and waiting to lead the way with the right combination of legal advice, skillful drafting, service design, and legal coaching ●

*“Verity’s firm is basing its impact business model program around supporting women in business”*



# Jeannette von Wolfersdorff

President of the Ministerial Advisory Commission for Public Expenditure at the Ministry of Finance.  
Location: Chile

**Q: What is your professional background and what is your story of becoming involved in the world of commerce and contracting?**

I am a German immigrant in Chile, with a finance background. Twenty years ago, I started as Investment Manager at DEG, the public German investment bank.

One of my first projects in Chile, was the development and building of an hotel on Easter Island. As Managing Director, I was responsible for design, engineering, permissions and construction; in between, the construction enterprise broke. I led conversations to create an agreement with local groups, Chilean government, and the investors, regarding interests of all parts. The hotel opened in 2011.

This lead me to work in civil society. I invented a ‘transparency index’ for political parties, being part of Transparency International. In 2015, I founded the Observatory for Fiscal Spending, an NGO with a small technological team which I led for six years as Managing Director. The aim was to use data analytics and visualizations to ‘open’ public finance. With support from the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP) we began to open public contracting data

more widely. We became part of the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT) network and were mentioned by the International Monetary Fund as an example for civil engagement. In 2017, I was invited to join the board of the Chilean Stock Exchange, as the first woman in its 123 years of history.

**Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career.**

### Making a positive difference

Between 2015–2021, in my role with the Fiscal Observatory I led, analyzed, and visualized data sets regarding public spending and contracting. Almost from the outset, we were supported strategically by OCP and GIFT.

- Our work was cited by the national competition authority and induced improvements on contracting data and corporate governance of the public institution in charge of pharmaceutical products. Several proposals were incorporated into the bill that seeks to reform Public Procurement Law.
- With OCP and the NGO Espacio Público we built a platform that measures the risks associated with each public bidding process, and institution.

- We opened a data portal of public infrastructure together with the private sector and the Ministry for Infrastructure. The portal makes transparent detailed information in contracts, competition levels and ex-post changes in terms and prices.
- The Budget Law for 2022 is obligated to set up a Beneficial Ownership Register. I started to encourage this initiative in Chile and continue to add support.
- In 2020, I was elected Chairman of a public commission to create proposals for Fiscal Transparency and Participation in fiscal spending. In 2021 we delivered a 100-page report to the Minister of Finance, which was unanimously signed.

At the Stock Exchange:

- I built the first Board Committee for Corporate Governance and Sustainability and was elected as Chairman.
- With the support of the World Wide Fund for Nature and the group of Corporate Leaders against Climate Change, I encouraged, and was functional in, the development of the first green and social bond market in the Chilean Capital Market. It opened in 2018.
- I also guided the first regional reports of RobecoSAM and local partner Vincular, opening statistics of listed enterprises and their sustainability ratings.

**Q: The ongoing pandemic has illustrated the inequalities that continue to exist for women and the critical importance of helping women to realize their professional aspirations – what role have you played or are you currently**

**playing within your organization or beyond to support women in their roles?**

Being part of the board at the Stock Exchange, I stimulated open debates and workshops on due diligence of human rights, gender diversity, and diversity more generally – in Chile, on a regional level with the Union of Exchanges in Latin America, and representing the Chilean Stock Exchange in Geneva, in front of the United Nations.

In 2020, under my leadership the Fiscal Transparency Commission was 50/50 gender equal. However, at the beginning of 2021, I decided to step down as manager of the Fiscal Observatory. The successor, I choose to lead in my place was a woman whom I believe in strongly.

During 2021, the editorial Penguin Random House asked me to write a book about capitalism. I am finishing this project this year. It is about market failings, and about leadership failings, brain bias and the risks of narcissism in connection with money and power. It will be a strong call to regulate capitalism and to set incentives to build markets on transparency and ‘leadership by privilege’ rather than ‘leadership by dominance’ ●

*“I stimulated open debates and workshops on due diligence of human rights, gender diversity, and diversity more generally”*



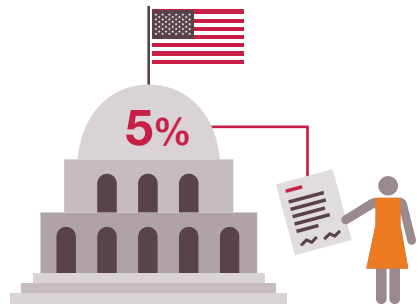
The articles that follow share the thoughts and passions of just a few of the Inspiring Women changing the world today.

We hope you gain inspiration from their commitment to a better, fairer future →

# Empowering women-led businesses and enabling inclusive growth

by the team at Open Contracting Partnership (OCP)

Women are excelling in business. According to the World Bank, women-owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs) contribute 20% to the global gross domestic product. Despite the growth of women's entrepreneurship, the number of businesses getting government contracts is much lower. For example, women-owned companies get only 5% of federal contracts in the US and 17% in Ukraine. Study after study has documented that women-led businesses are under-represented among government suppliers and when an intersectional lens is applied, factors such as race, disability, and geography further limit access to public procurement by women-led businesses.



The US federal government awards only 5% of contracts to women-owned companies.

This just isn't good enough. Women's participation in public procurement as users, planners, and suppliers is critical for the creation and monitoring of effective public services. Boosting women's businesses can create jobs and inject the market with new ideas and competition.

Lack of access to information, complex procedures and bias create barriers for women entrepreneurs, as well as under-represented groups.

Public procurement is the government's largest marketplace and governments engage at all levels of the procurement process. Governments can leverage their roles as 'market regulators' via procurement policies and as 'market participants' as purchasers of goods, works, and services to promote equity and equality. These powers combined have the necessary influence to shift market behavior and stimulate economic activity, towards gender equality goals.

So, how can we empower women-led businesses and make public procurement more inclusive?

A new research report, *Towards Gender Balance in Public Procurement*, by the Open Contracting Partnership and Value for Women explores the barriers facing women-led businesses in public procurement and gender-responsive policies that promote empowerment and inclusion. As governments explore how to restart the economy after the coronavirus pandemic, inclusive and gender-responsive procurement should be considered for a more equitable and sustainable recovery.

The following three key insights will help empower women-led businesses:

## To change it, count it

First, we need better data about women-led businesses. Without a baseline, it will not be possible to track progress. To understand the extent to which women (and other under-represented groups) are participating in public procurement, governments need to agree which groups to track, how they should be defined, and collect and publish it as part of data about bidders and suppliers.

## Engage with diverse communities

Secondly, engaging diverse stakeholders is a key pillar of open contracting. Our research highlights how important it is to consult and solicit feedback from women-led businesses to identify innovative approaches for communities. Through our research, we discovered engagement was often limited to market research while the contract went to traditional players. The earlier this dialogue happens in the procurement, the better.

## Accept the things you cannot change but change the things you can

Finally, women-led businesses have difficulty getting access to finance due to bias and discrimination from banks. This might seem like a problem that is 'bigger than public procurement', but if governments pay contractors promptly, the need for access to finance is mitigated. Once you understand what the bigger problems are, look for the ways in which you can be part of the solution.

There is still a long way to go to provide a level playing field for women-led suppliers. Opening up the public procurement market will help to address systemic inequalities, find the best businesses to provide the best solutions, and prove that gender-responsive procurement isn't just the right thing to do, it makes good business sense ●

Sources: [www.open-contracting.org/what-is-open-contracting/gender/](http://www.open-contracting.org/what-is-open-contracting/gender/)  
[www.open-contracting.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/OCP2020-Gender-Responsive-Procurement-1.pdf](http://www.open-contracting.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/OCP2020-Gender-Responsive-Procurement-1.pdf)  
[www.open-contracting.org/2020/07/21/breaking-the-glass-ceiling-for-women-led-businesses-in-public-procurement/](http://www.open-contracting.org/2020/07/21/breaking-the-glass-ceiling-for-women-led-businesses-in-public-procurement/)

*"Women's participation in public procurement as users, planners, and suppliers is critical for the creation and monitoring of effective public services"*

# My commitment to a sustainable future

by Elizabeth Wathuti, founder of the Green Generation Initiative

We are standing on the edge of the cliff – the cliff of climate crisis – and we must act now. Over two million of my fellow Kenyans are facing climate-related starvation. Our rivers are running dry, our harvests are failing. Our store houses stand empty. Our animals and people are dying, and I have seen it with my own eyes. By 2025 half of the world’s population will be facing water scarcity. By the time I’m 50, the climate crisis will have displaced 86 million people in Sub Saharan Africa alone.

Change begins when we recognize that just because the crisis isn’t visible to us, doesn’t mean it isn’t happening at all. There are people whose lives and livelihoods are impacted daily. The world that my friends and I knew as children changed before our eyes and our way of life changed. This was my catalyst. I took my grief and used it to do something about the challenges of deforestation and climate change. But we can’t do it alone. There are already people on the ground, doing the work.

Their love for this cause, their love for nature, and their love for every ecosystem continues to drive the communities striving for change. Their love amplifies my own reason to keep fighting. **There is everything left to fight for.**

I have been doing what I can. I founded the Green Generation Initiative, a tree-growing initiative that enhances food security for young Kenyans. The primary goal of the Green Generation Initiative is to address global environmental challenges including deforestation, pollution, and environmental injustices. So far, we have grown 1,000 fruit trees to maturity, providing desperately needed nutrition for thousands of children. Every day we see that when we look after the trees, they look after us in return.

If we are going to achieve everything, we will need everyone on board. Passion is the fuel that drives us forward, so if we can get everybody around the world to love nature, to appreciate our world, then we have everything we need to act. We must aspire to be part of something bigger than ourselves because we aren’t only fighting for ourselves; we fight to make the world a better place for everyone and all generations to come.

We must open our hearts, hear the stories of those bearing the brunt of the impact, acknowledge their suffering, and then take immediate action. This is about the future of humanity. There can be no more hiding – we are facing this challenge **today**.

When trying to make any positive change, you will encounter obstacles, challenges, and hardships along the way, but in the end the efforts will pay off. Nothing good comes easy. While there is no one person who will fix our climate crisis or gender divide, we as a collective community can be empowered to find meaningful and sustainable solutions that will have a lasting impact. I believe in our human capacity to care deeply and act collectively. I believe in our ability to do what is right if we let ourselves feel it in our hearts.

If you allow yourself to feel it, the heartbreak and the injustice is hard to bear. What I am talking about is not only the climate crisis, but climate justice. This is about ensuring representation, inclusion, and protection of the rights of those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. It is the little things we do that matter the most, and they eventually make a huge difference. The kind of people power I am aiming for holds enough potential to make a huge difference in the world today.

I envision a world where we can all live in harmony with nature without harming the planet. A world where everybody is mindful of how they will leave the planet for generations to come. A world where we will put people and the planet before profits. A world where future generations will not have to suffer and deal with the consequences of environmental degradation caused by those who came before them. I want the whole world to give environmental conservation the priority and attention it deserves. Nature doesn’t need us; we are the ones who need nature.

If we act now, from deep within our hearts; that is how we can change the world ●

*“I believe in our human capacity to care deeply and act collectively”*



In Kenya, Green Generation Initiative has grown 1,000 fruit trees, providing nutrition for thousands of children.

# The power of talking about failure

by Giorgia Vulcano

We are so used to hearing about other people's success – and we often only ever see the highlight reel. There seems to be this prevailing image that successful women should be owning their successes while not acknowledging the failures they encountered on the way. Failure is a normal, very human experience and something which connects us all.

I find a lot of inspiration in the teachings of Amy C. Edmondson (Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management at the Harvard Business School), especially when it comes to constructively learning from my experiences.



The best way to process and learn from failure is by talking openly and honestly about it.

## So, what are our biggest fears (and myths) around failure?

Many of us are afraid of failing, at least some of the time. However, when you look closely, we can discover many myths among those fears. The top three 'fears' around failure tend to be:

### 1. Judgment and disappointment (from self and others)

Perhaps the most common fear around failure is of being judged by others when faced with failure. This generally manifests in one's belief that, as a result of failure, their capabilities would be questioned, that (self) confidence would be lost, and that their personal brand would be impacted without the chance for recovery.

### 2. Inadequacy and helplessness

A fear and myth we commonly see is that of not being able to recover from failure and of being long remembered for it. Failure can also often feel like an end point, meaning that no second chances exist, and it will define you as a person from that day forward.

### 3. Loss of confidence and opportunities

A final common fear and myth that permeates failure, is the loss of confidence in oneself and from others. There is a sense of not being able to make the right decisions, finding the best solutions, or controlling outcomes. There is often a sense that success and failure don't go hand in hand and that we shouldn't be allowed to fail.

However, should it be a colleague facing failure, we would not think so harshly. We always seem to afford more 'forgiveness' to others than we do to ourselves. Failure should not be perceived as a negative, unwanted outcome. It is an opportunity to learn, and rarely does the sense of defeat, frustration, and disappointment linger.

## What can we learn? What advice can we take when we are faced with failure?

### 1. Embrace

Expressions of compassion and sympathy will never go astray, but especially so when the chips are down. Encouraging kindness, removing the self-judgement, and embracing the failure and its learnings is the best we can do for ourselves and others. Further, talking about failure can be a meaningful approach to alleviate the sting and embrace the experience. Resilience and grit as outcomes of the failure can be tremendous assets moving forward.

### 2. Normalize

Failure must be normalized. It is a common experience, and we must accept it may happen again (and often). No person is immune to the ups and downs of life! Failure is not an experience that defines you and the focus should be on what we can garner from an experience.

### 3. Learn

Failure is a necessary part of success and it may often lead to other opportunities. It is so important to keep trying, failing, pivoting, and learning from the experience, focusing on the learning versus the fear of failing, reacting and renewing energies before we embark on a new path.

## What action can we take? How can we normalize failure?

### 1. Sharing and accepting

Overall, a deliberate focus should be put on embracing and accepting failure, and whenever possible, with positivity. Sharing experiences about it and even 'failing often' can also be great ways to help normalize and accept downfalls.

### 2. Culture and awareness

Talking openly and honestly in sharing our experiences of failure, one's reactions to it, and the learnings taken is not only the best way to process it ourselves, but also in creating a culture where this is common practice. This is not only relevant in our personal lives, but especially so within our workplaces.

### 3. Create learning opportunities

We learn more from our failures than from our successes – we find out what doesn't work so that we can adjust our future attempts. Reflection is an important part of failure. What about the failure went well? What didn't go so well? Reflecting helps us to identify where things went wrong and from here, we can implement new ideas, new approaches, and new strategies ●

*“Encouraging kindness, removing the self-judgement, and embracing the failure is the best we can do for ourselves and others”*

# More than a feeling – the sociology of emotion

by Anna-Marie Southern, Program Manager, WorldCC Foundation and Executive Assistant, World Commerce & Contracting

## A brief description of emotion

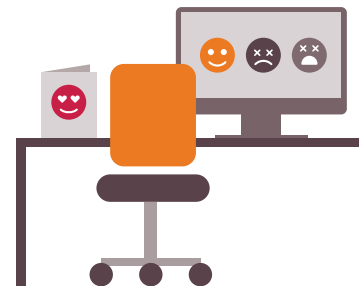
If I asked you to define ‘emotion’, how would you describe it? A sensation? An experience? At a very basic level, emotions are feelings, evaluations, and motivations. Emotions have been researched in several scientific disciplines: psychology, biology, neuroscience, anthropology, and sociology, as well as in business management, advertising, and communications. Distinctive perspectives on emotion have emerged as a result, and progressively led to the development of a variety of shared insights and beliefs about the nature and function of them.

For the purposes of this article, think about emotion as ‘a complex experience of consciousness, bodily sensation, and behavior that reflects the personal significance of a thing, an event, or a state of affairs’. Feelings are an all-encompassing, influential, and powerful phenomena. They allow processing and planning in response to stimuli, letting us know when we fall short on any of our needs. For example, many of us are unquestionably irritable when thirsty or hungry, so, in essence, feelings are messengers of needs, and we are emotional beings after all.

## So why are we talking about it?

Emotion isn’t only present in our personal lives. Did you laugh or smile at work today? Frustrated about slow-moving progress or proud of seeing a project through to completion? These are examples of the many emotional moments that occur in the office each day.

The sociology of emotion draws attention to the ways in which emotions – phenomena that have historically been viewed as inherently personal – are socially patterned. Why is this significant? Because we are talking about power in the collective. For years we have sought to control and suppress emotions in the workplace. They have been seen as a source of weakness rather than a force of strength. The time to change is now and a re-evaluation of the way we treat emotion in the workplace is well overdue.



Many different emotional moments happen in everyone’s work day.

Have efforts been made in this space? Sure. But when people talk about culture in the workplace, they’re generally referring to the cognitive culture: shared intellectual values, norms, and assumptions that serve as a guide for the group to thrive. Cognitive culture is undeniably important, yes, but it’s only part of the picture. The other critical part is a team’s emotional culture: the shared *affective* values, norms, and assumptions that govern which emotions people have and express at work. By giving thought to emotional culture, organizations can consciously generate positive energy and create workplaces that are not only more pleasant, but dramatically more productive and successful.

## It’s an emotional (and rational) journey

Emotional culture is shaped by how employees, from the highest echelons to the front lines, comport themselves day in and day out. Research shows that, for better or worse, emotions influence employees’ commitment, creativity, decision-making, work quality, and likelihood of staying with the company long-term. The new frontier for employment is quality of life and to stay in the competition, businesses must monitor and manage people’s energy as deliberately as they do their mindset.

Managing mindsets couldn’t be truer than when it comes to the contracting lifecycle. There are teams and individuals behind every stage of the lifecycle, pre- and post-award. Contracts specifically are initiated, negotiated, and driven by people. WorldCC research tells us that recognizing how relationships and communication impact the contracting lifecycle is a key component of true commercial awareness, collaboration, and ultimately, success. There is no question we already live in a world where collaboration is critical, and businesses cannot afford to disregard the human element; how can you collaborate without emotion?

“For a long time, the dominant perspective has been that emotion is the opposite of rationality.” *Prof. Myeong-Gu Seo*. What I have tried to illustrate here is that this is no longer the case.

Decision making, at any time in any scenario, is a complex matter involving both reasoning and emotion. As Stephen Fineman wrote in his book *Understanding Emotion at Work*, “rationality is no longer the master process; nor is emotion. They both interpenetrate; they flow together in the same mould.” Even the most emotional person uses rational thought when it comes to making decisions, and equally even the most rational person is affected by emotions. Feelings take care of desires and needs in the short-term, while rationality serves to defend our interests and wellbeing in the future. It is a perfect balancing act.

By attending to needs, both generally and in the creation of roles, business priorities, relationship management, and specific initiatives, organisations can place an immense store of positive energy behind their objectives. To be effective leaders and team members we need to be both emotional and rational. We must embrace both rather than idealizing one over the other. This journey is about being intuitive and emotionally intelligent, listening, checking in, responding, and building a culture which is rational, emotional, and inherently authentic.

How will you embrace emotion in your workplace? ●

*“By giving thought to emotional culture, organizations can consciously generate positive energy”*

# The sex slaves of Japanese soldiers deserve – at least – a real apology

by Sylvia Yu Friedman, TV host and award-winning filmmaker based in Hong Kong

In 1970, Willy Brandt, the late German chancellor, dropped to his knees as a sign of repentance before survivors of the Holocaust in Poland. Many said they were healed by his moving gesture.

For the thousands of girls and women forced to be sex slaves for the Imperial Japanese military from the 1930s to the end of the Second World War, a Japanese Prime Minister should have knelt on the ground in deep contrition for these ‘comfort women’. Instead, elderly survivors of this historical wartime sex slavery are still fighting for a sincere healing apology 85 years after the war ended.

I was 15 when I had first heard of the Japanese Imperial military sex slavery system. But I could hardly find any written information on this important historical topic, as if it had never happened.

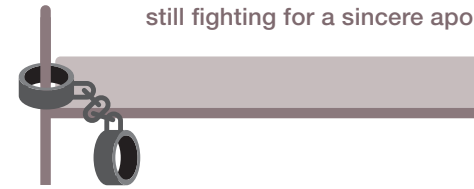
Years later in 2001 as a TV reporter, I travelled to Washington to hear a shy, 80-year-old Kim Soon-Duk testify at a press conference in which she described her three-year harrowing ordeal as a sex slave for the Japanese military when she was 16-years-old. Kim gave chilling details of how long lines of Japanese soldiers would stand outside her room. One after another in a steady succession, the men used her and the other women. Those who tried to run away were caught and killed to intimidate the others.

Since 2001, I have interviewed dozens of survivors. This period of captivity destroyed their lives. Universally, they told me that they wanted a sincere apology from the Japanese government that would bring healing and closure.

The Japanese government has claimed that all rights to compensation were dealt with in treaties after the war. Until 1991, Tokyo repeatedly denied that women and girls were forced into a systemic sexual enslavement and blamed private profiteers. For the victims, these denials added insult to injury. That is why these women began to speak out. About 200,000 women and girls as young as 11 were trafficked and forced into sexual slavery, euphemistically called ‘comfort women’ because their role was to ‘comfort’ the soldiers on the front lines. Women were also trafficked from nations considered ‘racially inferior’, including China, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, East Timor, Singapore and France’s former colonies in Vietnam.

This issue of wartime sex slavery has long strained relations between Japan and its neighbours. In the past several years, Japanese and Korean residents in various Western cities have fought over statues and plaques installed in public places to remember the women’s suffering. In China, two museums on the issue have opened in the past two years, in Nanjing and Shanghai.

85 years after World War II ended, survivors of military sex slavery are still fighting for a sincere apology.



One possible solution to this stand-off is grassroots reconciliation. In 2012, I documented a group of courageous Japanese people who personally apologised to survivors in Shanxi province. Tomoko Hasegawa, the co-leader of the Healing River-Rainbow Bridge, said their simple apologies brought powerful healing to the women. “We need to acknowledge the truth of what happened in history to these sex slaves and honour the victims,” she said.

Hasegawa’s Christian group travelled to Shanxi over several years. They wept with the women, and bowed in humility, sometimes in public spaces. They held a sign in public that said they were apologising on behalf of the Japanese for war crimes and the suffering caused.

Cindy Kan, a Singaporean based in Lanzhou, Gansu, said that wartime atrocities have led to racial hatred among the Chinese towards the Japanese. Her vision was to continue the reconciliation work so that healing may be extended to not just the survivors themselves but also their children and grandchildren, and future generations in China, Japan and Korea.

While working in China, I’d ask several Chinese about their thoughts on the Japanese. Almost everyone harboured deep resentment towards the Japanese for their wartime atrocities, pointing to the sexual slavery and the slaughter of 300,000 civilians during the rape of Nanking in 1937.

Another way forward is to convene a conference with representatives from all the affected countries. As many survivors as possible and their children should attend. Representatives should include government officials, human rights activists and scholars. The goal would be to come up with a practical, sincere apology and proper restitution once and for all. The errors of the past must be acknowledged and safeguards put in place to ensure government-sanctioned and managed military sex slavery never happen again.

A forum is also needed to try and resolve anger and hatred towards the Japanese. Unless this is done, such feelings will be passed down from generation to generation. A sincere, compassionate apology would help – it would show the world that the Japanese understood they had hurt others, and were willing to take responsibility for their actions.

The survivors are dying off – only a handful of women are alive in China, Taiwan, the Netherlands, the Philippines and Korea. Healing and reconciliation can happen only when a foundation of truth has been laid. It is time to do the right thing to bring an end to this tragic chapter of history.

*“We need to acknowledge the truth of what happened in history to these sex slaves and honour the victims”*

# Thank you to the Committee Members

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At the end of 2021, it was hard to imagine how we could possibly surpass the success of the inaugural year of our Inspiring Women program – and yet we have! And this is due in no small part to the contributions of our Inspiring Women Committee.

Their unwavering support continues to be instrumental to the success of this program and it is their contributions that help to create a platform for women around the world to be recognized and celebrated for their accomplishments.

This year, unlike 2021, we were finally able to come together in person, celebrating the program at our Summits in London and Phoenix and attending various events through the year. What a treat it has been to reconnect, and to celebrate together again!

I am so grateful to each and every one of you for your support and your friendship and I look forward to all that we will achieve together in 2023.

#StrongerTogether

## **Sally Guyer**

President and Chief Executive Officer,  
WorldCC Foundation

Global Chief Executive Officer,  
World Commerce & Contracting

Inspiring Women 2022 Committee:

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Chief Evangelist, Icertis

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## Kathrin Frauscher

Deputy Executive Director, Open Contracting Partnership

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## Sally Guyer

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## Nikki Mackay

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Partner, Deloitte Legal

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## Anna-Marie Southern

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### About WorldCC Foundation

Together we can change the world one contract at a time.

We envisage a world where all trading relationships deliver social and economic benefit.

As such, WorldCC Foundation works to promote and enable an environment where commercial policies and practices are fair and transparent, and contracts are accessible and inclusive for all. We believe better contracts lead to better business and ultimately a better society.

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### About Icertis

With unmatched technology and category-defining innovation, Icertis pushes the boundaries of what's possible with contract lifecycle management (CLM). The AI-powered, analyst-validated Icertis Contract Intelligence (ICI) platform turns contracts from static documents into strategic advantage by structuring and connecting the critical contract information that defines how an organization runs.

Today, the world's most iconic brands and disruptive innovators trust Icertis to fully realize the intent of their combined 7.5 million+ contracts worth more than \$1 trillion, in 40+ languages and 90+ countries.

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