

**INSPIRING
WOMEN**
in Commerce and
Contracting **2023**

A partnership of
WorldCC Foundation,
World Commerce & Contracting
and Icertis

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Contents

Inspiring Women 2023

- 4 Melanie Ahnau
- 6 Nada Alnajafi
- 8 Oleksandra Azarkhina
- 10 Concepción Campos
- 12 Victoria Cope
- 14 Delia Ferreira Rubio
- 16 Helena Haapio
- 18 Kristie Hamilton
- 20 Elaine Karp
- 22 Issel Masses
- 24 Sunny McCall
- 26 Kami Paulsen
- 28 Allison Ramirez
- 30 Vicky Revis
- 32 Kate Nicholl Skattang
- 34 Lisa Stubbs
- 36 Darya Swaby
- 38 Janet Taylor-Hall
- 40 Christine Tønsberg-Nilsen

Inspiring articles

- 44 Embracing neurodiversity in the workplace
- 46 Nurturing parental and professional success
- 48 Advancing gender equality in procurement and supply chains
- 50 Pride or prejudice: is media friend or foe?
- 52 Cultivating leadership excellence

Thank you

- 54 The Inspiring Women 2023 committee
- 55 Closing thoughts
- 56 About WorldCC Foundation, World Commerce & Contracting, and Icertis

Welcome

WorldCC Foundation

I am so grateful to our year of 2023 Inspiring Women for sharing their stories, their journeys and their passions. In some instances what has been shared has been deeply personal and I am always so taken by the positive impact that not just authenticity, but true vulnerability can have on our audiences. These women have shared their emotion, reminding the world that emotions are a powerful and extraordinary part of being human. In celebrating our Inspiring Women 2023, we also celebrate the collective strength that emerges when individuals come together with a shared purpose. So, for those of you who have shared this last year with us, I hope it has been as amazing for you as it has for us and for those of you reading this book with little or no knowledge of these women or our program – prepare to be inspired!



Sally Guyer
President and Chief Executive Officer,
WorldCC Foundation

Global Chief Executive Officer,
World Commerce & Contracting

Icertis

Of the many impactful initiatives that Icertis has the privilege of partnering with WorldCC, the Inspiring Women program holds a special place of honor. In its third year, the program's alignment with our respective organizations' mission and purpose remains unrivalled: for WorldCC, "Better contracts, better business, better society"; at Icertis, we seek to "empower companies to realize the full intent and higher purpose of every contract, so they can build trust, strengthen bonds, and create a better world".

The women named to this year's list embody this collective pursuit – each striving for excellence in her own way and positively impacting her organization, community, and society for good. More importantly, their work has a ripple effect; data shows that when investment is made to give equal opportunities to women, they generously turn around and empower other women and their communities, spurring economic growth, innovation, and societal health. While there is celebration to be had, the achievements are not without defying societal expectations and overcoming adversity. As you read the profiles of success, resilience, and triumph, I hope you are ignited by a sense of hope and pride that lights and forges a path for generations of women leaders to come.



Bernadette Bulacan
Vice President, Chief Evangelist, Icertis



Melanie Ahnau

Commercial Leader, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, New Zealand.
Location: New Zealand

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

Thirteen years ago, I embarked on a career in government procurement, starting with New Zealand's *Warm Up New Zealand: Heat Smart* programme. This experience ignited my passion for procurement's potential to enhance people's lives. Transitioning to local government, I managed contracts for graffiti removal and asset repairs. Instead of merely addressing vandalism, I established the *Stokes Valley Pride* mentoring programme, which led to an 80% reduction in graffiti and positively impacted at-risk youth. I was incredibly fortunate to have a manager who endorsed and encouraged my developing vision to use procurement as a lever for public good.

Currently, I serve in a central government deployable commercial team, working across agencies to facilitate complex projects. My expertise lies in expanding supplier diversity, which aligns with addressing child poverty and wealth creation. Enabling emerging small businesses, traditionally excluded from government contracts, fosters financial independence, breaks generational poverty cycles, and reduces crime, all crucial in combating child poverty.

By giving people the ability to support themselves financially, and participate in the government contracting arena, we increase their standard of living, their sense of pride, we break generational chains of poverty, and we reduce criminal activity. As a person who has lived in the chains mentioned above, I am passionate about sharing a message that tells procurers how important their role is and how it contributes to significant positive change in our country... and that is my life purpose.

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

Displaying resilience in the face of uncertainty

I'm an indigenous woman from very humble beginnings. I grew up speaking simple English. I barely spoke during the first year of working in a corporate environment, I didn't fully understand what people were saying, and I didn't know how to articulate myself. It was a complete shock. This year, I have been asked to speak publicly four times to an audience of over 7,000 people, sharing my story and advocating for those with less equitable starting positions. I am an authentic voice and a beacon of possibility.

I am a soft spoken, reasonably young, coloured woman with a gentle demeanour and this has made me a target of bullying in the workplace. Only in the last few years I've grown the courage to start calling people out. I've encountered questions about being 'the token Māori'; men often try to back me into a corner; people have made me feel guilty because I can't do something that disrespects my culture. Despite pressure to conform, I've remained true to myself, refusing to teach my daughter that she should change to gain respect. My journey continues, driven by the desire to pave the way for future generations of young women. I'm carving a path so that young women will not have to face the same struggles, in the hope they won't be asked to change who they are to fit in. That they will live in a world able to speak their truth and people will listen – they may not agree, but they will have enough respect to give people from minority groups the space to be heard.

Making a positive difference

In 2013, I was pregnant with identical twin girls. Tragically, Alyssia passed away at 29 weeks gestation due to umbilical cord complications. Her surviving twin, Mila, suffered temporary brain oxygen deprivation. The first month of Mila's life was spent in the hospital. At five months, it became apparent she wasn't reaching developmental milestones, diagnosed with quadriplegia cerebral palsy. Despite working and juggling hospital stays, we raised \$110,000 within a year. Tragically, Mila passed away in 2018 due to complications from her disability. Her funds were donated to charities supporting disabled children facing challenges, marking the start of my healing journey.

In January 2022, I joined a board supporting the disabled community, ensuring our experiences benefit others. I also assumed a role on the Oranga Tamariki Disability Advisory Group, advocating for disabled Māori children disproportionately affected in state care. My goal is to expand the Ministry's mandate to include 'prosperity', providing these children with opportunities to thrive. It's a long but vital journey.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

In 2021, I established the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) Internal Broader Outcomes Leadership Group. I work in the New Zealand Government Procurement branch of MBIE, and I managed to connect with 30 like-minded people from across our agency to seek out people and groups who might have been working in silos, to deliver broader outcomes. The group has been a great avenue to share upcoming conferences, success stories and training opportunities. The intention of the group is to grow knowledge of procurement policy and practice within MBIE, establish MBIE as a leader in implementing broader outcomes, and be an example for other agencies to follow ●

"I'm carving a path so that young women won't be asked to change who they are to fit in"



Nada Alnajafi

Senior Corporate Counsel, Franklin Templeton; Founder, Contract Nerds;
Author, *Contract Redlining Etiquette*.
Location: USA

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

In addition to her work as in-house counsel, Nada has dedicated herself to bettering the global contracts community by creating quality content about contracts and developing engaging communities for contracts professionals. Her mission is to help fill the education gap and the community gap so that professionals who work with contracts are better supported and set up for success.

Beginning in 2020, Nada has regularly posted about contract negotiation and redlining tips on LinkedIn. After seeing the responses and realizing that this type of content filled a much-needed gap in the contracting community, she knew she had to do more. That's when Nada founded *Contract Nerds*, an expert-driven resource and community for all types of contracts professionals around the world. Today, Contract Nerds supports thousands of contracts professionals from varying backgrounds, industries, and locations globally. She has published articles from over 70 contracts experts, and she has mentored eight law students.

In 2022, Nada published her book *Contract Redlining Etiquette*, which provides the first and only uniform set of rules about how to redline contracts. According to a recent poll Nada conducted with over 1,000 respondents, 78% of contracts professionals learn how to redline contracts while on-the-job instead of in a classroom, formal training program, or from a hands-on mentor or boss. This lack of uniformity creates many inefficiencies, frustrations, and skepticism within the contract negotiation process. Her work has sparked a movement within the contracts community to change the status quo and take a more purposeful and strategic approach to redlining contracts.

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

Inspiring and influencing others

Nada inspires and influences many contracts professionals through her LinkedIn posts, content, book, mentorship, speaking engagements, webinars, keynotes, and one-on-one meet and greets. Her combined personal and professional network includes 25,000+ contracts professionals globally. Nada's work has inspired contracts professionals to take a more

strategic and collaborative approach to redlining contracts. She has also been a vocal proponent about the need to stop using PDF redlines and always be transparent with counterparties during contract negotiations. These types of mindset changes ultimately lead to better contracting processes, increased job enjoyment, and a greater sense of community.

Social value

Nada has brought tremendous social value to the contracting space by promoting inclusivity in our profession. Not long ago, it was normal to categorize people as lawyers versus non-lawyers. When Nada began creating content, she asked herself who her audience was. Nada intentionally uses 'contracts professionals' instead of 'non-lawyers' and, in doing so, has helped raise awareness across our industry about the importance of using inclusive terminology both within our contracting industry and in our contracts. This has helped us feel closer than ever as a community and emphasizes the immense value that diversity brings to our work. In her book, Nada dedicates an entire chapter to the topic of eliminating bias and promoting inclusivity in our drafting. For example, she recommends removing gender pronouns from agreements and being mindful of the varying resources (technology and other) available to our counterparties during negotiations. These principles help create a collaborative and inclusive experience for those working with contracts and those using or reading them.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Nada is well-versed in overcoming adversity through resiliency and perseverance. She is a second-generation woman, she graduated law school during

the 2009 recession, she worked for free for her first year as an attorney, and she did not take a traditional path to get to where she is today. Her personal approach has been to be proactive, pivot quickly, and never give up. But what she never had was a solid support system that she could lean on or learn from. Until now.

By creating Contract Nerds, Nada has provided a much-needed platform within our industry that encourages long-term resilience amongst contracts professionals and the organizations they work for. A place where all contracts professionals can feel accepted and supported and connected to a larger group of like-minded individuals. Nada believes that the sooner we start exposing ourselves to contracts and learning practical skills that we can demonstrate on our resumes, the more resilient we become as a profession.

Over the past two years, Nada has virtually mentored hundreds of professionals and personally mentored six law students through the internship program she runs through Contract Nerds, helping them land jobs in the contracts space straight out of law school. Interns have shared that their job prospects multiplied when they added this internship to their resume and that prospective employers were always interested in learning more about the opportunity, leading to a great conversation-starter during interviews. This is the penultimate value-add for newer professionals that they have not historically had – meaningful exposure to contracts before entering the professional world ●

Nada emphasizes the importance of eliminating bias and promoting inclusivity within the contracting space



Oleksandra Azarkhina

Deputy Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine.
Location: Ukraine

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

I started my career in politics and communications at the age of 13. At that time, the Orange Revolution was raging in the country. I joined the team of supporters of the revolution, although in Crimea, where I come from, few understood this decision. The society was torn, and I was looking for answers about how to sew it together again. I chose the Philosophy Faculty and the direction of political science. There I formulated my views on Ukraine – we are a nation with historically weak government institutions and very strong horizontal ties. We are a nation that can be chosen, if you are ready to join a common project – the project of Ukraine, a better place for us and our children to live. After Russia's occupation of Crimea, these dreams became practical goals – I want to build a successful Ukraine, to return justice, the rule of law and Ukrainian power to the peninsula.

Since then, I have worked for the Ukrainian government as a consultant and advisor – in the Ministry of Food and Agrarian Policy, in the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, in the State Road Agency and the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine.

From 2016 to 2020 I was managing my own PR and consulting company, Fixer Agency. Through the World Bank project on the Corruption Prevention in the Road Sector I started my cooperation with Oleksandr Kubrakov, now Vice Prime Minister for the Restoration of Ukraine. I found out that building bridges between different parts of the country might be an even more effective way to unite the country. As a Deputy Minister of the Communities Development, Territories, and Infrastructure of Ukraine I'm responsible for strategic planning, regional development and critical infrastructure development and protection.

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

Innovation and entrepreneurship

- Launch of the anti-corruption programme in the State Road Agency of Ukraine (Ukravtodor) within the framework of the Agreement with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Investment Bank (EIB), together with the Basel Institute on Governance.
- The attraction of the first infrastructure Eurobonds to the Ukrainian market.

- Launch of the large-scale reform of the quality management of infrastructure projects, which involves the transition to modern world practices in planning, prioritization, construction norms and standards, the procurement process, and risk insurance.

Making a positive difference

- Development and launch of the first digital road management system in Ukraine, E-Road.
- Support to the launch of the Weigh-in-Motion system in Ukraine: both at the level of a pilot project, within the agreement with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), and the national level of dimensional and weight control.

At this stage, together with the team I'm working on the system of Digital Reconstruction of Ukraine. This key anti-corruption tool guarantees transparency and accountability in implementing infrastructure projects. The system is based on a digital registry of damaged and destroyed property. This system will enable us to draw up plans for the implementation of reconstruction projects and to monitor work processes such as data analysis, planning, design, procurement, etc. International partners and donors will be able to monitor and analyse project progress and costs.

I also participate in the development of the post-war recovery strategy for Ukraine, namely the recovery of the Crimean Peninsula. Moreover, together with the Ministry of Infrastructure team, we are working hard on several issues related to the effective protection of critical national infrastructure, and the delivery of humanitarian and military international aid to Ukraine.

Recently, with the Presidential Office team we held the first International Summit on Food Security in Kyiv. President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy kicked off the Grain from Ukraine project. This humanitarian programme aims to deliver millions of tons of Ukrainian grain to the countries at the edge of starvation. I'm assisting in coordinating key stakeholders to help Ukrainian farmers, Ukrainian sea ports and the people of Africa.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Resilience has become one of the key definitions of the Ukrainian people in the fight against Russian unprovoked aggression. Team stability can only be found when everyone shares common values and a common goal. War simplifies the process of the consolidation of society and its stability on many levels. I think more and more is about how we will maintain stability in the difficult process of reconstruction, which will affect not only our infrastructure, but also the entire society, which is going through the traumatic experience of war. Our secret is – human value above everything else, doomed optimism, and the ability to adapt to any catastrophe and ultimately bring order to chaos ●

"I want to build a successful Ukraine, to return justice, the rule of law and Ukrainian power to the peninsula"



Concepción Campos

Co-director of Red Localis, and Coordinator of the Integrity Group in Public Procurement of the Network of Local Entities for Transparency and Citizen Participation (FEMP).
Location: Spain

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

I have always liked the law, since I was a child, according to my mother, I wanted to be a judge, but little by little I turned towards the legal profession, and it was always clear to me that I wanted to study law, the first doctor of law in my family, in fact the first person in my family to go to college.

But despite that early desire to be a lawyer, my vocation for public service led me to the public sector where I joined a body dedicated to legal advice and compliance with the law – which I have combined with the university teaching that I currently practice.

My restless spirit has led me to launch many different initiatives such as the Localis Network, a think tank, and different documents and publications, filling gaps that I saw in the field of dissemination and training. This helped lay the foundation for Compliance in the Public Sector, to be part of projects such as the Observatory of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, the project of which I feel most proud to launch and preside over, the Association of Women in the Public Sector.

And here I must stop, because equality, or the fight for equality is part of my essence as a person, that's why I wanted to be a judge, that's why I wanted to be a lawyer, and that's why every day at the service of the citizenry seems like an opportunity to improve public management, always centred on people. In this way I came to public contracting, where I have introduced compliance techniques, with the conviction that with integral, transparent and strategic contracting, focused on added-value, society can be transformed – that the focus of economic to social, can improve the quality of public services and people's lives.

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

Inspiring and influencing others and leadership

Throughout my career I have launched various joint initiatives, in which the ability to generate and lead differentiated and innovative projects can be observed. On the one hand, with local governments, bringing together university experts and experts from the local public sector, to transfer knowledge and collaborate with public institutions in pre-legislative

and legislative processes. On the other hand, through the establishment of the Association of Women in the Public Sector, which has brought together hundreds of women from all levels of public sector administration across the territory. This initiative aims to empower female leadership through mentoring programs and the development of an expert agenda, thereby promoting the visibility of female talent in decision-making, in accordance with the recommendations of SDG 5.

Leading in technology

Technology is a key element in the action of public authorities, and in contracting, for greater transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency. My work has been recognized with the ENATIC (2022) 'Digital Innovation' award, for promoting digital transformation in the Public Administration, and I have achieved success in the implementation of electronic administration, and the application of open data used in public procurement.

Raising the reputation of contracting

As coordinator of the Integrity Group in Public Procurement of the Network of Local Entities for FEMP, I have placed integrity in procurement at the centre of the public agenda, bringing together thousands of local entities. The group is made up of university professors, experts in public management, contracting managers and general managers – from which dissemination, training and awareness actions are coordinated, and specific products have been promoted such as the Decalogue of Integrity in Public Contracting, the Guide to Integrity in Public Procurement, and the Code of Good Practices in Procurement.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a profound crisis in health, society, and the economy, necessitating a re-evaluation of traditional public sector paradigms and the social contract. In Spain, the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan was executed to address this scenario. Public procurement plays a pivotal role, aligned with anti-fraud measures and the circular economy to address ecological challenges.

As a member of the Group of Experts for Public Administration Reform in the Spanish Government, I have contributed to shaping the future of public management during the recovery process. I am particularly proud of my work as Coordinator of the Integrity in Public Procurement Working Group for FEMP, which focuses on engaging local governments, public servants, and contractors as essential stakeholders in this transformative effort. As an expert, it is my role to collaborate with various entities to harness synergies between public policies, emphasizing people-centric management in driving change. Through media, we aim to raise awareness among citizens regarding the public sector's role in the process. Finally, I am a passionate advocate for leveraging the crisis as an opportunity to promote public management aligned with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, highlighting how public procurement can serve as a catalyst for achieving these goals ●

“The fight for equality is part of my essence as a person”



Victoria Cope

Commercial Director, Government Commercial Function (GCF).
Location: UK

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

I began my career as an aeronautical engineer using my technical background and operational analysis skills to support governments across the world on their defence procurement policy and multi-million-pound procurement decisions.

Building upon my technical background, I enjoyed using my influencing and negotiation skills to deliver value to stakeholders and therefore moved into the sales and contracting function.

Since then, I have spent 20 years building my career journey transitioning between the procurement and sales aspects of the commercial profession, having had the benefit of working within some fantastic organisations including, BAE Systems, QinetiQ, Airbus, Unilever and currently the Government Commercial Function. I have had the opportunity to lead the commercial function of +£12bn organisations, establishing greenfield functions, leading high-impact, cross-sector social value programmes and presently leading the commercial, contract and business development functions within the UK Health Security Agency.

I am passionate about the commercial profession as it provides the ability to make an impact at scale. I help organisations define and realise their strategy, use commercial innovation to achieve enhanced competitiveness and resultant growth in revenue and market share, and identify, manage, and mitigate third-party risk to the organisation. In my early career doing a ‘great deal’ was something that gave me those ‘Yes!’ moments, whether it be with suppliers, customers, or investors. Today seeing my team shine, creating, and delivering world-leading commercial strategies and innovative commercial models, doing deals which deliver both financial and social value and seeing them achieve their full potential, as a team and as individuals, inspires me daily.

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

Leadership

I am passionate about people and thrive on building and leading, high-performing, globally distributed functional teams (~300 FTE) and complex contract portfolios with an aggregate value of ~£13bn spend, within complex, federated organisations, and regulated sectors.

I build a respectful, inclusive, and collaborative performance culture within my teams ensuring everyone feels comfortable bringing their authentic self to work daily, embracing our differences, and using our diversity of thought to the benefit of the organisation. I proactively develop the capability and performance of my teams and mentees, through an empowering and coaching leadership style, guiding their personal development techniques and structured capability development programmes, to help them meet their full potential. I contribute to the charitable sector as a Non-Executive Board Member of The Air League, supporting aviation talent development. I also serve as a Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Audit, Risk, and Assurance Committee for the Inspiring Leadership Foundation, empowering vulnerable women to achieve independence and personal growth.

Diversity and inclusion

I have championed diversity, equity, and inclusivity in the aerospace, defense, and security sector throughout my career. As a female leader and working parent, I serve as a role model and actively promote diversity through speeches, podcasts, interviews, and articles – I encourage and mentor individuals of all backgrounds, genders and career stages to excel in the field, fostering their development. In the GCF, I led the creation of an SME toolkit to facilitate collaborations, partnerships, and agile contracts, enabling SMEs to deliver advanced technologies more efficiently in regulated sectors. I also proudly serve as a mentor for SME CEOs through ‘Be the Business’, offering guidance and support to executives.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Whether considering the resilience of individuals, teams, organisations, or the wider partnership ecosystem, increasing resilience has never been

more important in the world we operate in. People are pivotal to the success of any organisation and I’m passionate about my teams achieving their full potential, performing to their best of their ability both as individuals and a team. As someone with a defence and security background I have leveraged my experiences to create a culture embodied by:

- A clear vision and common purpose
- A core set of personal and organisational values
- World-class leadership – inclusive, inspirational, empowering and coaching
- A pipeline of capable and adaptable talent – leveraging personal and team strengths engendering a growth mindset
- Holistic performance – mental wealth, mental health and wellbeing. Balancing peak work times with well-earned downtime and investment in personal development
- Working smart – Work where, when, and however best for individuals and teams to achieve optimal outcomes.

Engendering a growth mindset regarding the commercial partnership ecosystem has allowed me to develop and enhance organisational resilience, maximising financial, sustainability and social value opportunities. Within my organisations I employ strategic risk and opportunity management, implementing innovative commercial strategies, including embedded spend management which have delivered double digit savings and revenue growth, improved contract delivery, as well as securing supply chain resilience and social value outcomes ●

“Seeing my team shine, inspires me daily”



Delia Ferreira Rubio

Chair, Transparency International.
Location: Argentina

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

I graduated as a Lawyer in 1979 and started my academic career at the Institute of Political Science and then at the Comparative Law Centre. I continued my studies at Madrid's Complutense University where I obtained my Ph.D. in Law. While I was in Madrid, my first book, *The Right to Privacy*, was published in Argentina and was awarded the Córdoba's Bar Association's Prize. My Ph.D. dissertation on *Bona Fides* as General Principle of Law, which was awarded *Summa Cum Laude*, was published in 1984 in Madrid.

When I returned to Argentina, I was appointed as an Assistant Professor at Buenos Aires University Law School. In 1984 I was appointed Director of Legislative Projects in Córdoba, in 1988 I was appointed Advisor to the Under Secretary of Institutional Affairs for the Federal Government, in charge of the organization of the presidential election of 1989. Between 1990 and 2005, I served as Chief Advisor for several Representatives and Senators

at the National Congress, advising the Constitutional Committee of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Between 2005 and 2007 I served as Advisor at the National Accounting Office.

In 2007, I decided to engage completely in my career as an independent consultant. As such I have consulted on anti-corruption and transparency related issues for the IDEA International, Inter-American Development Bank, UN-Women, Global Integrity, COUNTERPART, and many other international organizations and NGOs.

Between 2008 and 2014 I served as a member of Transparency International's global Board. In 2017 I was elected the Chair of Transparency International and in November 2020, I was re-elected for a second mandate. I am a Member of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Partnership Against Corruption Initiative, and a Member of the Board of the UN Global Compact. I served as Member of the Steering Committee of OGP (Open Government Partnership) and was the Co-chair of the Global Future Council on Anti-corruption of the WEF (2019–2022).

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

Recently a journalist invited me to reflect on my own career and as I was preparing for the interview and reviewing more than 40 years of work, it became clear that I have been always working on and around the importance of values, both for our individual lives and as the leading principles in societies. I began with articles on values and law, delved into democratic culture, drafted legislation, engaged in civil activism, tackled political finance and anti-corruption efforts, promoted business integrity, worked on electoral reforms, and ventured into AI transparency and accountability – all grounded in the core principle of values.

Today, values stand as the linchpin amidst the concerning erosion of democracies, marked by waning trust in institutions and leadership, especially interpersonal trust. In numerous societies, the basic value consensus has shattered, leaving blurred lines between right and wrong, truth and falsehood, exacerbated by the rapid spread of social media. My consistent message remains that rebuilding this consensus is paramount for social justice, equality, and inclusivity.

My role as the leader of Transparency International, a global NGO with chapters in over 100 countries, is similarly guided by values. During my five-year tenure, which included navigating a pandemic, I oversaw essential changes. I restructured governance, reinforced integrity systems, and most crucially, fostered interpersonal trust. While there's always room for improvement, I believe my leadership style, marked by diligent commitment and leading by example, openness, inclusivity, and a genuine appreciation for a job well done, has contributed to our successes.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

I think my previous answer goes in line with the question about resilience. I believe that resilience is not only essential in personal life but also for organizations. Apart for the anti-corruption work itself, my challenge at the organizational level has been to create resilience and I am confident to say that Transparency International is a more resilient organization now than five years ago. In general terms, working with values is working for resilience, social and institutional resilience. This is – as I said before – my main concern nowadays when we face the decline of democracies around the world and the rise of authoritarianism. To strengthen and re-build democracy's resilience we must go back to values and standards, to the basic principles, that is – in my view – the only effective way to overcome the crisis and build a sustainable future ●

“I have been always working on and around the importance of values, both for our individual lives and as the leading principles in societies”



Helena Haapio

Contract Strategist and Associate Professor of Law, University of Vaasa.
Location: Finland

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

A pioneer of Proactive Law and Contract Design and a former in-house counsel, Helena is on a mission to change the way contracts are designed, communicated, perceived, and taught. She started to experiment with *real-time visualization* in contract education and contractual risk management in the 1990s. That led to the idea of business-friendly and human-friendly contracts. And what better way to bring the idea to practice than empathy and design. Building on what is now known as Proactive Contracting and Proactive / Preventive Law she found that simplification and visualization could help to operationalize the approach.

Helena is a co-founder of the Nordic School of Proactive Law, the ProActive ThinkTank, the International Network for Proactive Law, and the Legal Design Alliance, and a co-creator of the WorldCC Contract Design Pattern Library. She defended her doctoral dissertation on *Next Generation Contracts: a Paradigm Shift* at the University of Vaasa in 2013.

Now she is a practitioner by day and a researcher, author, and editor by night. She recently co-edited two books for Edward Elgar, one on Legal Design and the other on Contract Design. In her free time, she likes to learn from information designers and play with emerging tools such as GPT-3 and ChatGPT, exploring how these might help contract readers and writers.

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

Inspiring and influencing others

See the *WorldCC Contract Design Pattern Library* co-created with Stefania Passera. The Contract Design Pattern Library is an open and accessible library; an ongoing collection of effective, repeatable solutions to commonly occurring usability and understandability problems in contracts. The patterns are designed to help organize and communicate contracts more clearly, so that they are read, understood, and acted upon.

Innovation and entrepreneurship

Identifying and co-developing new approaches to contracts, contracting and the law, such as Proactive Contracting, Proactive Law, Contract Design. Legal Design: co-founding the Nordic School of Proactive Law, the ProActive ThinkTank, the International Network for Proactive Law, and the Legal Design Alliance.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Writing books and articles and *organizing and speaking at a number of events* in Finland and abroad about topics such as humanizing contracts and the law, responsible and sustainable contracting and collaborative business relationships ●

Helena is on a mission to change the way contracts are designed, communicated, perceived, and taught



Kristie Hamilton

Global Director of Global Purchasing and Manufacturing Services Operations and Transformation, General Motors.

Location: USA

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

Kristie joined General Motors (GM) in 2001 and has worked in a variety of departments, including Manufacturing Engineering, Global Engineering, Purchasing, and currently Global Business Solutions (GBS). She is the Global Director overseeing Corporate Services Purchasing, Purchasing as-a-service, Supply Operations, Material Management, Manufacturing Services, and Transformation & Business Development Organizations within the Global Purchasing and Manufacturing Services Group. These functions service all GM organizations globally and are performed in 17 languages and multiple systems. The skills learned and overall development in Engineering, Manufacturing and Global Purchasing allow for creative 'out of the box' problem-solving and solutions with a global view. The goal is not just faster and cheaper, but also a better user-experience, improved supplier relationships, relevant metrics, data transparency and understanding the 'why'. All with a foundational focus on transformation. As a Global Leader, she encourages strategic thinking, resulting

in innovation and action. Kristie is an agile leader, who is creative as well as collaborative, allowing her to adapt to the rapidly changing automotive industry.

Prior to working in GBS, Kristie worked as a manufacturing engineer in designing and overseeing the build, installation and debugging of new equipment for the manufacturing and assembly of components, as well as product movement equipment. Kristie also has experience in Indirect, Machinery, and Equipment at GM, working on projects that brought better value to their manufacturing.

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

In her current role, Kristie leads an organization of over 800 people. She is driving resilience through her active development of team talent that understands the importance of adaptability, adopts an open 'growth mindset' and is encouraged to build creative solutions. Kristie consistently models resiliency through clear communication on new strategy or direction, a focus on building trust and embracing differences in her team and the ability to offer fresh,

bold perspectives. Among her many other strengths, problem-solving and risk-taking would be high on the list. Her creativity and fearlessness make her a leader in an ever-changing industry. Kristie continually maintains a transformational mindset, making her an agile, yet collaborative individual. An excellent example would be the implementation and management of the Indirect Material Distribution Center. The goal is to centralize frequently used parts, reduce ordering, complexity, and supply chain issues. It allows for the leverage of bulk-buying opportunities. It reduces plant inventory levels and improves order to delivery timing, providing two weeks of stock with weekly shipments to the sites. It has evolved over the past year from a pilot to partnership and performance all in 2022. Cost reductions and savings are already being achieved. Kristie was instrumental in the concept and vision to get this up and running and continues to be involved as it expands.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Kristie's team is unique; they support everything in GM that does not go directly on the vehicle. It is a broad spectrum of indirect parts, services, and suppliers, which includes everything from consulting, advertising, cafeteria services, cutting tools, HR benefits, laundry, travel, as well as shared purchasing services. Kristie's leadership style is founded on empowerment, support, guidance, and encouragement. She leads by example; her leadership inspires and provides the team freedom to think strategically, share ideas, and strive for innovation. Her knack for asking questions that trigger 'out of the box' thinking is what has developed a team with outstanding talent.

Making a positive difference isn't something she works at, it comes naturally. Kristie serves as a mentor in multiple forums, with a focus on being respectful, empathic, inclusive, bold, and customer-oriented. Her integrity and bravery to always 'do the right thing' are undeniable. One of her favorite quotes is *"In a world where you can be anything; Be Kind"*.

Recently, Kristie toured Cristo Rey, a local high school that partners with businesses to provide student internships. GM has been an active partner, including several interns in Kristie's organization. During the tour, Kristie was advised that 20-30 students were without internships for the school year. Without hesitation, she immediately responded with "we will take 10 students". She also reached out to our supply partners to offer this sponsorship opportunity. Her efforts proved successful; several suppliers have joined the program. At times her position is challenging, and many days come with new complex situations. Kristie has a gift for handling these circumstances in a calm and professional manner, all while being confident and strong.

Kristie's organization provides an invaluable experience. The past few years have been full of chaos and uncertainty, which Kristie has handled with strength and grace ●

Kristie's leadership style is founded on empowerment, support, guidance and encouragement



Elaine Karp

Senior Director of Legal Operations, Baxter International.
Location: USA

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

With an economics background, my career began in supply chain management, but I took a pause to have three wonderful children, including twins. I re-entered the workforce as an Analyst at a small firm specializing in legal spend review. Analyzing thousands of legal invoices gave me deep insights into how large corporations collaborated with major law firms. After over a year as an Analyst, I seized an opportunity at Mondelez as a Senior Analyst in their Global Legal Operations. Here, I discovered my passion for legal operations. Simultaneously, I started going to the gym, eventually evolving into bodybuilding, finding parallels between my career and my athletic journey. After nearly two years at Mondelez, I transitioned to Kraft Heinz as a Senior Manager, continuing my bodybuilding journey, and even competing. A subsequent move to R1 RCM as Director of Legal Operations saw me achieving significant milestones in bodybuilding. My career trajectory led me to Senior Director of Legal Operations at Baxter, where I continued breaking personal gym records.

While I've shifted from competitive bodybuilding to pursuing an Executive MBA at Kellogg, my career in Legal Operations is still evolving, and I eagerly anticipate what the future holds.

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

Leading in technology

Baxter is leading the way in terms of technology innovation, and I've been happy to be a part of it. Over the past four years, we've deployed an ecosystem of tools and processes that has enabled the Legal Department to serve its customers at a very high level. Our work was recognized by [Law.com](#) when I was awarded Innovator of the Year in 2022.

Bringing technology into a global organization involves much more than the software itself, in fact, the selected technology is only a part of the consideration and implementation. Technology leadership involves developing a roadmap for the future based on the value the organization seeks and the associated return on investment. Technology leadership requires a review of process and impact of change – implementations and deployments must be timed in consideration of

one's users, direct users such as the legal team itself and indirect users, like Procurement and IT. Change must be deliberately managed, too, and extends to formal change management processes, like listening, process mapping, and KPI identification.

Making a positive difference

I consider a key function of Legal Operations to be caring about the individual, as much as we care about how we're enabling the team to be successful. This can be as simple as a well thought-through on-boarding process for new hires to make them feel cared about and a part of the team. It can be availability earlier in the morning and late in the evening to handle questions or to aid global team members.

Caring about the individual extends to the little things, like ensuring the legal team has opportunities for continuing education or the ability to attend conferences. It can mean a sympathetic ear when someone needs to vent or a ready recommendation for a great dentist or tutor or weekend kid's activity. These may sound like extracurricular activities, but I can say with certainty, they make a positive difference. When folks feel cared about, and important, and listened to, and supported, they are more effective and productive, and I consider this to be as much an aspect of Legal Operations as a matter of management technology or business process design.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Change is difficult. Change takes time. Even senior leaders who understand the value of change intellectually, will oppose it. Resilience is an absolute requirement for accomplishing change in companies large and small.

Implementing, from ground-zero, and deploying an enterprise-wide contract management system at a global company faces many challenges. Team members far and wide will not understand the reason why – 'isn't SharePoint good enough?' Those not used to technology will complain that anything new is too difficult, too time consuming; 'it's not broke, so why are we messing with it?' At nearly every turn, someone, somewhere, will bring an objection. This is what we contended with when implementing our global contract management system. In the face of these and many other objections, you must keep going. People need to see something multiple times before they understand the value. They need proof, they need hands-on use, they need faith, and the only way we were able to accomplish our implementation was to be consistently strong, to push, encounter objections, go back to the drawing board, and then push again. We never gave up – we focused equally on groups who were most able to see the value and on the groups who were the most opposed. In the end, we won them over. Our biggest critics are now our greatest supporters, asking for more training, more features, and more technology ●

“Caring about the individual extends to the little things, like ensuring the legal team has opportunities for continuing education or the ability to attend conferences”



Issel Masses

Founder and Executive Director, Sembrando Sentido.
Location: Puerto Rico

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

My commitment to public service was first instilled in me by empowered women such as my grandmother, a pioneer in facilitating ground-up participatory efforts to help protect and strengthen vulnerable communities in Puerto Rico. This commitment is what decades later inspired me to search for academic and professional opportunities including working at organizations such as the World Bank and Deloitte Consulting. Through my work in these institutions, I developed expertise and passion around democracy and good governance reform at the local and international level. These experiences were also instrumental in teaching me the importance of knowing when to lead and when to follow / support, how to collaborate effectively and develop others, to be self-aware and practice solidarity, and manage challenging tasks successfully with strong organizational skills and perseverance. Moreover, this same path prepared me to lead governance and resiliency efforts at home and abroad.

In 2017, while supporting the response and recovery efforts in Puerto Rico during the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, I became painfully aware of how inefficiencies in public procurement hindered the

government's capacity to respond to emergencies, led to significant delays in reconstruction efforts, and limited equity in contracting and recovery processes. Weaknesses in public contracting alone costs Puerto Rico up to three billion dollars a year, resulting in low-quality, unreliable, and unnecessarily expensive essential services, from building up the power grid to rebuilding our roads.

Upon this realization, I decided to move back to Puerto Rico, and form part of the efforts that promote a promising and climate-adaptive reconstruction process through the fair and equitable use of public resources. I founded Sembrando Sentido, a nonprofit organization that works to make government data truly open, building power in our communities to improve, monitor and safeguard the use of public resources, including in public contracting.

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

My innovative thinking has served as a critical driver to the success of our work at Sembrando Sentido. When we began our efforts in 2020, we identified that over 50% of the budget of the Government of

Puerto Rico was spent in procurement. Furthermore, public contracting information was incomplete and decentralized in over 56 portals. Against all challenges faced, creative thinking is what led to the development of the first digital platform and database in Puerto Rico that would open, centralize, monitor, and evaluate public contracting. Today, *Contratos En Ley* presents twice as much information as that shared by the Government's contracting portal and raises red flags on potential corruption risks for over 12% of contracts to promote preventive oversight and timely course correction. Our work also uncovered critical weaknesses including the massive disparity in reconstruction contracting between funds awarded to Puerto Rican-based contractors (36%) versus contractors based in the U.S. mainland (63%). *Contratos En Ley* helps communities understand, oversee, and participate in the decisions that affect them, has resulted in collaborations with public and private entities who want to transform our procurement system, and has allowed us to help journalists and intelligence units investigate high-risk contracts.

And while innovation is at the core of what I do, our work also requires a great deal of courage. Courage to create new, to confront unknowns, and to face the consequences of speaking up and advocating for change. Daunting as it may be, I recognize that fighting against corruption is no easy task, and that promoting more equity and efficiency in contracting, would face resistance. Still, leading with courage has led to the creation of solutions previously deemed impossible, and an impact in our communities that is already palpable.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

As I worked to create what is now Sembrando Sentido, I envisioned an organization centred on learning and growing as a collective to promote resilience and sustainability of our mission and our values. Alongside our collaborators and colleagues, we have worked to develop an organization of professionals committed to promoting an open government and fostering civic engagement and oversight, to strengthen our democracy and create a just, equitable and prosperous society.

The work culture of Sembrando Sentido is centred around respect for the people who we work with, and for – whether they are employees, professionals, volunteers, or beneficiaries. It is a work culture characterized by values, policies and practices committed to the well-being and growth of our contributors. We encourage and provide opportunities for continuous training and provide guidance and mentorship. We recognize the importance of multidisciplinary teams and partnerships, that share their respective insights and knowledge, and work together to elaborate innovative solutions to address the multidimensional development challenges we face. That said, we aspire to always maintain a culture of growth, where everyone has opportunities to lead efforts, gain exposure, learn new skills, and collaborate with others within and outside of our organization ●

“Our work culture is centred around respect for the people we work with, and for”



Sunny McCall

Senior Director, Compliance Training, TRACE International.
Location: USA

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

As a law student I was certain I was going to be a litigator, but then in 2004 life threw me a curveball which fortuitously led me to my passion – a career in compliance training. Following law school, I launched first into a career in legal conference production, largely specializing in events focused on the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and international trade law. Seeking to further specialize in legal and regulatory-focused training programs I then joined a start-up as one of the founding executive team members focused on both content and operations.

With a Juris Doctor (JD) degree and a deep passion for global compliance, I've spent over 15 years developing compliance, legal, and business-focused training programs for prestigious organizations, including Fortune 500 companies, top academic institutions, the AmLaw 100, and esteemed industry associations. Joining TRACE was a natural career progression, allowing me to concentrate on supporting organizations in developing effective compliance training programs. My role at TRACE has enabled me to combine my compliance expertise and entrepreneurial skills to serve the global membership

community. With nearly two decades in the 'business of compliance', I've gained first-hand insight into best-in-class approaches to corporate compliance training, offering guidance to numerous multinational organizations.

Over the years I've found myself drawn to leadership opportunities and greatly enjoy the professional development aspect of people management. As a minority I actively seek out opportunities to develop staff within my team to ensure everyone receives a fair and equal opportunity to be their best self without sacrificing one's work-life balance. I pride myself in being a committed manager who equally values the work and the people who make the work possible.

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

Leadership

In my current role, I am thankful to be a part of a mission-focused, non-profit organization which also boasts a remarkably diverse workforce with almost half of the organization staff representing both females and ethnic minorities. The CEO of TRACE is a female as is the entire leadership team of which I am a part.

I am an active member of TRACE's Culture Committee and participate routinely in strategic, management conversations in support of TRACE's global membership which is comprised of hundreds of global multi-national organizations representing a wide array of sizes and industries. Through the collaboration and support of an excellent team my department at TRACE has successfully overseen the launch of several new products / offerings to the TRACE membership leading to increased member retention, higher level adoption of eLearning and increased revenue which benefits the membership at large.

Inspiring and influencing others

Pivoting to the point of inspiring and influencing others, I pride myself in being a proponent of 'promoting from within' whenever possible and have supported the upward mobility of more than five TRACE staff through one-to-one mentoring, cross-departmental promotion, and career coaching.

I can remember a time when the professional development of women, particularly minorities, were hard sought opportunities often taking twice as long to achieve as others. I have seen first-hand that it is possible to successfully support the progression of minority leaders within an organization if one genuinely commits time to learning about one's staff and then proactively seeks out opportunities for their upward mobility and supports them in the same.

I've found there is no set or 'magic' path to leadership, but Colin Powell may have said it best: "Effective leaders are made, not born. They learn from trial and error, and from experience".

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Personally, and as a leader, I gravitate to a challenge. I credit this to the exposure to considerable personal adversity I faced growing up as a young adult; so, I am no stranger to resilience.

As many will know within the compliance realm, at the heart of what we do is an underlying commitment to ethics and forthright business conduct. A key to ensuring your team and those around you are committed to the same is an unflinching devotion to a set of values and / or organizational culture that supports ethical behaviour. I mention this to reinforce my belief that the recipe to ensuring long-term resilience within any organization lies within its people. If you follow the same recipe – a good one – each time, *ideally* you should achieve the same (or a similar) result. This subscription to a core set of values, strong work ethic and genuine engagement as a manager will support an approach towards long-term resilience.

Through the collaboration and support of an excellent team the Compliance Training department at TRACE has grown triple-fold the past three years with minimal turnover while delivering stellar results and exceeding expectations. Having taken a slightly less traditional path as a law school graduate I consider myself lucky to work in such a dynamic field and alongside some of the most well-known, knowledgeable, and most-respected voices in global compliance ●

"I ensure everyone receives a fair and equal opportunity to be their best self"



Kami Paulsen

Managing Director, Deloitte.
Location: USA

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

Kami has been in the Contract Lifecycle Management (CLM) and legal technology space for over two decades. Her contribution to the CLM space traverses through various roles like educating organizations about CLM, on how to get ready for it, and ensuring adoption while also strategizing on expansion.

In the two decades of her professional experience, 15 years have been dedicated to implementing CLM for Fortune 50–100 customers in the Enterprise. She has worked with customers like Nike, Apple, Starbucks, PepsiCo Global, and Fidelity at IBM for much of that time. While in that role, she also helped build the Customer Success organization for CLM. After moving from IBM, she spent two years in Customer Advocacy for Icertis. She also enjoys deep relationships with many CLM vendors and has utilized these connections to provide best-in-class advice to organizations.

In her personal life, she loves challenges and facilitating change. She is a strong advocate for women in technology. She also serves on the board of Empowerment, which provides opportunities to at-risk youth and helps victims of sex-trafficking recover and support themselves. Her leadership and impact-making ability also allowed her to create a product – ‘The Bako Box’, a gift box sourced with items from small businesses in her community, mainly stay-at-home moms.

Kami has also worked in Customer Success at Okta and assumed overall customer adoption responsibility. In this exceptionally technical role, she worked with Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) and Chief Technology Officers (CTOs) of vertical industry leaders like University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles, and Hulu. She continues to build and run professional services teams in the CLM space – and has recently written a book, *The CLM Rx*, which contains valuable information to guide organizations on every step of the CLM journey.

As Managing Director for Elevate’s consulting practice, she advises customers on CLM strategy, successful implementations, CLM solutions, market trends, and automation.

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

Inspiring and influencing others

Kami’s professional accomplishments are an extension of her personality. Her dedication comes from her innate nature to inspire and bring a difference, be it in her quest to educate on CLM implementation or mentoring women from backgrounds in law enforcement, education, and healthcare to transition in technology, specifically CLM tech.

Making a positive difference

She’s a wife of a veteran, and she also assists veterans in transitioning their rich skillset into technology. As an adoptive parent and foster family, she has a special place in her heart for under-represented and at-risk youth.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

In her current role as Managing Director for Elevate’s consulting practice, Kami has been supporting the Sales and Delivery Teams as a subject matter Expert in CLM. Her vision in CLM implementation is based on stage gates with ongoing iterations and starting with a smaller universe of agreements while creating a team of specialists.

Kami believes in smart start offerings to encourage the team to harmonise the content, thereby making the development of workflows and KPIs less daunting. While some may cut their teeth on technology, she believes that technology is not a magic bullet but a creation of constant iterations and a building by a team of champions ●

Kami’s dedication comes from her innate nature to inspire and bring a difference



Allison Ramirez

Senior Contracts Manager, EDF Renewables North America.
Location: USA

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

Since April 2016, I have been serving as the Senior Contracts Manager for EDF Renewables North America. Within the Legal Department, my role encompasses a wide array of responsibilities, such as contract preparation, review, negotiation, and overall management. I also take charge of overseeing contract processing needs throughout North America, conducting training sessions, and fulfilling the role of Contract Lifecycle Management (CLM) Administrator.

Prior to my current position, I held various roles within the company, including Project Administrative Coordinator from 2011 to 2016, Contracts Supervisor from 2008 to 2011, and Land Contract Administrator from 2007 to 2008. My extensive experience and expertise contribute significantly, making me a valuable asset to the organization.

Q: Tell us about two personal achievements and contributions through your career. And how have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Making a positive difference

EDF Renewables is a global organization leading the renewable energy charge for over 35 years. We are committed to building sustainable systems for a better future. After making the move from a legacy CLM solution to a modern, cloud-based platform, our team was empowered to simplify complex transactions and streamline standard agreements across our organization. With the Legal team going digital, I was able to remotely coordinate all logistics, communications, and trainings to successfully implement the new CLM, now with 200+ users, meeting our digital transformation goals. With this being a 'self-service' CLM, anyone in our organization now has the ability to meet our unique contract flow down requirements, seamlessly working wherever in the world where wi-fi is available.

Inspiring and influencing others

Written by El Mendoza, Compliance Manager, Asset Optimization, EDF Renewables North America

"I always tell Allison how much I look up to her. I can never say enough how impactful she has been, but I will do my best because I want to share how inspiring she is. When I joined the company, being my first job in a different country, I was still determining what to expect, and I wasn't sure if I was capable of the tasks thrown at me. You know, all those self-doubt things. I reached out to Allison on my first day and introduced myself, and she was so welcoming that I felt I would be in great hands at that moment.

Her support, collaboration efforts, and knowledge of what she does are beyond measure. Sometimes you'll fear just how smart she is, but it is so inspiring to me. She helped me go above and beyond in all my tasks regarding contract management and then some. She inspired and encouraged me in many ways that brought a lot of benefits to my performance for the company and my team. She is very generous in sharing her knowledge and makes sure I am learning from her and from my mistakes, to apply them in my daily work life. Her words of encouragement always resonate with me. It is very tough to imagine my work life without her, and that's why I am very honored and grateful that I get to work with her and gain not just knowledge from her but also the inspiration for me to do my tasks and achieve my goals every day" ●

"Allison helped me go above and beyond in all my tasks"



Vicky Revis

Head of SAP Fieldglass, EMEA North.
Location: UK

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

I lead SAP Fieldglass in Northern Europe. SAP Fieldglass is part of the Intelligent Spend and Business Network solution area (Procurement) in SAP and our solution set help organisations manage their external workforce and service providers through standardising the engagement of all categories of external workforce, automating contracting, invoice, and payment processes. SAP is one of the world's largest business software organisations with over 100,000 employees globally. I have been part of the regional leadership team now for two years having previously led our professional services organisation where our team delivered customer solutions across EMEA.

I have always worked in or around the world of external workforce having fallen into recruitment very much by accident after college. I began my career in high street recruitment having not known what I wanted to do, and quickly moved into consulting and project delivery. In 2007 I decided to take a break to have my children and stepped back from the corporate world, while establishing a bookkeeping business from home.

Fast forward six years and I found myself as a newly sole parent, needing to re-build my life and head back to full-time employment with two young girls to support. I rang my old contacts and a few days later was back in the world of consulting and project delivery of External Workforce Solutions, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementations and Vendor Management. Through several subsequent moves, I started at SAP in 2016 and have not looked back. Throughout my career at SAP, it is difficult to pinpoint individual successes, I am part of a hugely successful team who have delivered key customer programs and wins – while being able to provide for, and bring up my two girls.

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

Inspiring and influencing others, and displaying resilience in the face of uncertainty

As the first female leader and someone without a sales background to lead SAP Fieldglass in Northern Europe during the COVID era, I encountered unique challenges. Fieldglass was still in the process of integration with SAP, which was also transitioning

from on-premises to a cloud-based organisation. This transformation introduced various commercial models, sales approaches, and customer / partner operating methods.

In response to these changes, our team had to navigate SAP's vast scale and size. To succeed, we refocused our efforts on supporting SAP teams in scaling Fieldglass and emphasised the importance of the external workforce spend category to capitalise on SAP's ownership and scale. My strategic approach involved harnessing our team's individual strengths and weaknesses to develop clear messaging, go-to-market strategies, and business value that could be effectively communicated across the matrix organization, reaching our customers and partners.

This approach proved highly successful, and within a year, the structure was replicated globally across SAP Fieldglass, leading to numerous customer successes. Key factors behind our success included recruiting team members with diverse skill sets to support our customers and internal teams throughout the lifecycle, allowing us to act as trusted advisors and remove previous obstacles. In SAP, networking across the organisation is crucial. Our team's ethos fostered an open-door policy, making Fieldglass easy to do business with for SAP colleagues, customers, and partners, aligning our solution with customer outcomes, particularly considering that about half of any customer's workforce is external.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

As an acquisition within SAP, it can be difficult to find your voice particularly as a small solution area, all acquisitions can be fraught with challenges!

Our industry is at a turning point, Vendor Management Systems (VMS) were principally something staffing organisations implemented to support the management of their outsource service. Nowadays, we are seeing a real and true transformation to a VMS being part of a customer's enterprise software landscape, integrated to wider procurement applications. This industry transformation, new buying centres and stakeholders, coupled with our own transformation to being part of SAP, has brought challenges and opportunities. My ethos in leading the team in Northern Europe has been to build a resilient team, capable of operating in these changing times, leaning on the best content and minds from our global and wider regional teams. In everything we do, we look at a programmatic approach, bringing the best from history around our customer centric operating models but learning to scale inside the larger organisation. Taking the structure, rigour, and clarity of contracting and customer engagement models and adapting these to our changing customer base while preserving our commercial frameworks for our historical partner and customer base. By taking the best of both worlds, we can develop an organisation that remains the world beating external workforce software provider but also fosters a network and community for our customers, partners and employees that allows them to make the difference with outcomes that have tangible business and personal impact ●

"I've built a resilient team, capable of operating in these changing times"



Kate Nicholl Skattang

Director of Climate Change and Sustainability Services, Ernst & Young (EY).
Location: Australia

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

I started my career in procurement and supply chain, working as a buyer at Ford and later as a global supply specialist at Rio Tinto. My path shifted when Rio Tinto acquired Alcan in 2007, leading me into management consulting roles at Accenture, KPMG, State of Flux, and now EY. Additionally, I lectured in supply chain strategy at the University of Melbourne for five years.

Initially, my consulting focus was on traditional supply chain matters, but I gradually expanded into modern slavery and supply chain sustainability. The catalyst for this shift was a trip to India and China in 2007 while working for Rio Tinto, where I discovered the prevalence of modern slavery, particularly in brick kilns. This eye-opening experience motivated me to delve deeper, leading to collaborations with NGOs and academic research on modern slavery in the seafood industry.

This work produced an academic paper, *Private governance of human and labour rights in seafood supply chains – The case of modern slavery crisis in Thailand* in a marine policy journal, *an article in The Conversation*, and contributions to the introduction of modern slavery legislation in 2017.

Currently, as a director at EY, I concentrate exclusively on assisting clients in addressing sustainability challenges in supply chains and supplier management. My initial focus on modern slavery has broadened to encompass conducting risk assessments on broader Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) issues. I work with clients to reduce Scope 3 emissions and promote supplier diversity to positively impact communities. I've shared my perspective on these topics in a recent [LinkedIn article](#).

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

Inspiring and influencing others

For close to seven years now it has been my personal (work) purpose to raise the awareness of procurement professionals around the risk of modern slavery, biodiversity impacts and the opportunity to have a positive impact on the community by targeting procurement spend with first nations business / employment, social benefit suppliers, and local suppliers in areas where they operate. I have done this through my work, but also through publications, and collaborations with NGOs and with universities. As well as my work with the University of Melbourne, in my current work I am now working on a research piece with the UN global compact and Griffith University on impact organisations can have through supply chain sustainability initiatives.

Leadership

I am a director at EY now, but I have had a roundabout way of getting here. I have taken time out of my career in 2015 to explore a passion project, I've worked with organisations that align with my values. I see a lot of people in industry and in big four consulting who just want to charge up the corporate ladder, my style of leadership is about authenticity and expression, and contributing. I model that myself, and I encourage it with my junior teams.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

I work in the EY climate change and sustainability services team now, not the supply chain consulting team. I believe that climate change and sustainability now need dramatic action, rather than incremental change, if we are to avoid the looming climate and human rights crisis that our children will have to face ●

“My style of leadership is about authenticity and expression, and contributing”



Lisa Stubbs

Policy Lead Open and Transparency Contracting, UK Cabinet Office.
Location: UK

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

At 23, I entered civil service, unsure of my path. Initially, I delved into telecoms and technology procurement at a central agency. The dynamic environment allowed me to learn and advance rapidly, eventually securing a management role. Motherhood prompted a career break, fostering entrepreneurial pursuits, but my heart led me back to public service. A serendipitous encounter introduced me to procurement policy, a realm where I could shape new methods and legislation. I played a pivotal role in adapting UK procurement regulations for Brexit and contributed to the formulation of a fresh regulatory framework. My specialization became transparency in public procurement, ensuring information was promptly disclosed to facilitate commerce and empower citizens in monitoring public sector contract processes. Today, I lead the transparency and open contracting team, crafting policies and collaborating with legal experts to take primary and secondary legislation through the Houses of Parliament. What I find fulfilling is the opportunity to enhance the commercial landscape, benefiting suppliers, civil society, and the public sector. Balancing the diverse

needs of stakeholders, my focus is unwavering in delivering optimal outcomes.

I'm deeply passionate about my work, knowing it drives positive changes in public procurement practices. Leading a team and nurturing individual growth is a joy, and I consider myself fortunate to contribute to a transformative shift in public procurement for generations to come.

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

Inspiring and influencing others

Several years ago, I embarked on the procurement rules reform program, a journey of inspiring and influencing change. My mission was to engage with stakeholders and reshape regulations, a task daunting for those who had built their careers on existing EU-derived legislation.

To be bold and remove red tape, I embarked on a year-long tour, meeting over a thousand stakeholders from diverse sectors. I addressed scepticism and fear of change head-on. Of course, there were things in the existing rules that were universally loathed! By offering

up a view of the landscape that was unconstrained, I was able to chair good conversations and take back the views of an encouraged user group. I advocated for policy proposals to Ministers, focusing on expanding transparency throughout the procurement process, from intentions to contract implementation. This comprehensive transparency, covering procurement details, beneficial ownership, performance data, and more, represented a significant advancement.

Leading in technology

My role extended beyond policy design; I became a technology leader, spearheading the implementation of the new regulatory regime for procurement transparency. I envisioned a system where information could be easily shared, and I designed policies to leverage a centralized digital platform. This platform allows suppliers to register once and reuse their data for various purposes, such as sharing information about opportunities, tenders, awarded contracts, contract documents, and spending details.

I meticulously structured this design to ensure that all pieces of information could be interconnected using unique identifiers. I am currently in the process of drafting legislation to bring this vision to life.

This innovative approach will place the UK at the forefront of using technology to provide access to public procurement information. The seamless interaction between the regulatory regime and the digital platform will empower users to access comprehensive procurement information from a single location. Citizens can examine their local authority's contracts and spending, while smaller contracting authorities can effortlessly identify suitable frameworks. Suppliers will gain insights into upcoming opportunities up to 18 months in advance. This integration of technology and regulation promises to revolutionize how we access and interpret public procurement data.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

The civil service is a great place to have a career and it is a forward-looking environment, in my experience. People who stay in the civil service long-term (and Cabinet Office in particular) are often more motivated by the opportunity to do something unique and personally satisfying than the financial rewards. The 'train set' we work with in the commercial policy environment is huge and attracts motivated people.

Resilience is vital across the civil service – it is a tricky economic environment currently, and the political environment has been somewhat changeable over recent times. The civil service works in a cycle of change as the political direction is affected by elections, bringing a new mandate. As a team leader, I build resilience in my team by equipping them with the right skills to do their jobs, creating an appreciation of the need to think more widely and strategically to accommodate potential political change and coaching them through the 'bumps in the road' that every business faces. Ensuring that people are encouraged to learn, and flourish is vital to that, and I encourage people to invest in new learning and skills. Civil service training is very good, there is a lot of opportunity to learn, grow and progress and work on some of the UK's biggest projects. I encourage people to try new roles and promote if and when appropriate. I take great pride in seeing people I have brought in, grow, and move upwards. Having an open conversation with colleagues about the environment and the change we all deal with ensures that it is 'normalized' ●

“Leading a team and nurturing individual growth is a joy”



Darya Swaby

Director of Supply Chain Management, Sempra Infrastructure.
Location: USA

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

My family has a long tradition steeped in the energy sector with my great grandfather working in the first ever oil field in Kazakhstan in the early 1900s, to my father dedicating his entire working career to the energy transportation sector. Some would say it was inevitable for me to follow in the footsteps of those who laid the pathway. My professional career started in 1999 with Fluor on a pipeline project in Kazakhstan. Since that first project, my supply chain management career has taken me on a journey supporting a variety of developments throughout exploration, drilling, construction, and operations both onshore and offshore working with major energy leaders like Chevron, ENI, and Shell.

In 2018, I made the decision to broaden my supply chain skillset by understanding the manufacturing sector with Daikin in the capacity of senior commodity manager. Although this step presented a steep learning curve, it fundamentally enhanced my expertise as well as my ability to pivot at the important junctions of my career while increasing my leadership experience guiding a wonderful team in a fast-paced environment implementing Japanese manufacturing principles.

Fast forward to 2019, when I joined Sempra Infrastructure as a project procurement manager taking on increasing responsibilities where I now work in the capacity of Director of Supply Chain Management. I also never lost track of my professional development whilst obtaining the Member of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (MCIPS) professional designation, an Executive MBA from Mays Business School, and an Executive Certificate in Management and Leadership from Sloan School of Management. I was and remain an inquisitive learner.

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

Raising the reputation of contracting

As a procurement manager on an Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project in Baja California, Mexico, I faced challenges such as remote location and a limited local talent pool in the energy sector. Success hinged on building trust, both within collaborative teams and across the organization. I find it important to improve through continuous learning. I started by building an understanding of local operations, market realities

and teams. Listening and asking the right questions proved far more important than telling and commanding. I embraced the local culture and found connecting points that made sense no matter the geography. Throughout implementation, I always remembered the importance of code-switching during communications.

Over a period of a few months, the continuous effort led to the reality where every point made by the supply chain no longer met extensive business opposition but was accepted as a valued input. The positive shift in perception quickly spilled outside local project boundaries and facilitated constructive dialogue across the organization. At the same time, working in an environment of collaboration and partnership facilitated the growth and development of local talent.

Leading in technology

Sempra Infrastructure's Guiding Principle of Technology and Innovation drives us to leverage technology, encourage innovative contributions, and react effectively to data and market dynamics.

Under my leadership, we initiated a project to create an interactive platform for quick, data-driven decision-making. Using PowerBI, we developed interactive dashboards to visualize data trends and counts across all business activities. Key to our success was obtaining executive sponsorship, facilitating agility and broad organizational support. A passionate, cross-functional team with expertise in data analytics and procurement led the effort, operating autonomously to foster creativity. I provided guidance, network engagement, and issue resolution.

We began by interviewing various organizational functions to identify data needs and conducted gap analyses. We pulled the initial data set and designed reports to align with high-level and granular data requests. We collaborated closely with North

American teams to automate data processes, seeking input from departments like Information Technology and Cybersecurity and Accounting Systems and Controls. This comprehensive approach ensured a well-rounded project implementation philosophy.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

I have and continue to encourage resilience in my organization by addressing the needs of the talented and experienced team in Sempra Infrastructure. Knowing my team allows for candid career development conversations where employees find an inviting workplace where they can engage in rewarding activities e.g., project environment versus category development. The roadmap for action included competency assessments of all employees across the organization, enabling individual talent development plans as well as standardization of competencies matrix across the employee pool. This helped the organization to know what was expected of them at each stage of their career journey. Finally, conducting a deep dive into the company's processes using Kanban techniques, allowed the team to establish a road map for process improvement across various key stakeholder disciplines. Having an engaged team coupled with utilizing efficient processes helps to build long-term resilience ●

“Listening and asking the right questions proved far more important than telling and commanding”



Janet Taylor Hall

Chief Executive Officer, Cognia.
Location: UK

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

Janet is a mother, wife, friend, mentor, founder, and CEO. She has a passion for ensuring the diverse team of legal professionals she works with, and the communities in which she operates, thrive. She spends her time between London and Cape Town. Janet has spent her entire career building solutions initially as a management consultant at Ernst & Young, then for 10 years at Clifford Chance, followed by two years with a Legal Process Outsourcer (LPO) Integreon, and for the last 10 years as CEO and Founder of the law company Cognia Law.

“Waking up in the morning and having something important to do” is something Janet lives by and has found this only comes when what you are doing benefits a wider community. Founding Cognia has enabled her to do that every day. She actively shares her experience and network with others. In this way sustaining relationships and building new ones which includes mentoring.

She believes passionately that it is only through collaboration that we will drive the sustainable change we all seek.

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

Innovation and entrepreneurship

Janet, an industry veteran with over 30 years in professional services, outsourcing, and the legal sector, founded Cognia Law in 2013. Her vision was to create a company with diverse, collaborative teams that harnessed innovation to address clients' challenges. She believed that lasting transformation in the legal sector required strategic partnerships between in-house teams, legal service providers, and key stakeholders.

Janet's success in realizing this vision is evident through industry feedback. According to the Head of Alternative Delivery Solutions at a global law firm, “Cognia is focused on the client's problems; they are responsive, collaborative, and straightforward without jargon”. The Head of Contract Services at a global bank highlighted Cognia's flexibility and creative problem-solving. Janet is particularly proud of the partnership with the Head of Legal at the British Red Cross: “At a time of acute humanitarian crisis because of the conflict in Ukraine, the legal team within the British Red Cross were grateful to be able to rely on overflow support from law company Cognia.

They continue to work in partnership to find ways of handling spikes of work including using tech.”

Janet's innovation and entrepreneurship have earned Cognia recognition, with accolades such as being shortlisted for the Financial Times Innovative Lawyers 2022 Award as a Leading Integrated Solution Provider and winning the *Financial Times North American Innovative Lawyers 2019 Innovation and Collaboration Award* for their effective London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) solution developed in collaboration with Hogan Lovells, FTI Consulting, and Elevate.

Supporting diversity and inclusion

Cognia was founded to create a world class environment where you can bring your whole self to work. The focus on diversity and inclusion attracts and retains diverse talent. Janet has prioritised the following areas:

- Committing to and improving representation metrics across the organisation and the management team
- Embedding diversity and inclusion in Cognia's lived values
- Reaching out and creating opportunities within local communities
- Collaborating with clients, partners, and colleagues to improve diversity and inclusion across the sector.

These values underpin an established Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program and inform pro bono work. Cognia team members engage with Ikamva Youth in various initiatives, including career days and mentoring programs.

External feedback validates the positive culture Janet's actions have cultivated. Claire Chapman, General Counsel and Company Secretary at Hargreaves Lansdown, said, “Cognia brings much more than deep legal expertise. They have lots of talented people with a cultural ethic that resonates”.

As a proponent of sector-wide change, Janet recently hosted the inaugural Shifting the Dial on Diversity event, where senior women leaders in the legal sector convened to drive tangible progress. The focus is on identifying levers for change, from organizational policies to procurement decisions, to establish new behavioural norms in the legal sector.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Janet prioritises mindful leadership and wellness as the cornerstone of building resilience across Cognia for both individuals and teams. She leads by example and encourages others in senior roles to do the same as well as establishing a wellness programme to share best practise, instil good behaviours and provide effective tools. This programme has several elements including weekly meditation sessions, and organising acclaimed speakers to explore a topic in detail.

In the wider ecosystem Janet focuses on helping clients build sustainable solutions. She helps clients rethink their sourcing strategy as a key component of a well-defined and mature operating model that powers successful partnering with the business. Key to this is developing long-term deep strategic relationships to ensure that the ecosystems flourishes. It's about making a sustainable decision around who you partner with resulting in a move from transactional relationships to strategic partnerships ●

“Waking up in the morning and having something important to do”



Christine Tønsberg-Nilsen

Chief Legal Officer, Cognite AS.
Location: Norway

Q: Describe your professional background and story.

Christine is responsible for all legal operations in Cognite globally. She has extensive legal experience and is a specialist in technology law and software-as-a-service (SaaS), with a focus on strategic and commercial assessments. Christine is known for having digitized and streamlined the legal department in Cognite in record time through the implementation and use of legal tech tools.

Christine has previously worked in the technology department of Sands and been Chief Legal Officer in the listed technology company Next Biometrics. In addition to her law degree, she has a degree in entrepreneurship and a bachelor's degree in psychology.

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

Leading in technology

Christine is visionary in her ways of working. She thinks outside the box to structure her legal team's work through use of legal tech tools for increasing

value, efficiency, and productivity and to reduce administrative burden. She has created and implemented a complete legal technology architecture for Cognite Legal, consisting of (among other things) a contract management platform, a compliance screening solution, an online ticket system for legal assistance, and a chatbot for automated first-line legal support with integrations connecting the solutions. This has made the legal team scalable during years of rapid growth for Cognite. For Cognite's annual compliance training, Christine and her team built their own gamified compliance training program, which she plans to commercialize and sell to other companies. Christine is continuously scanning the market for new legal tech tools and assessing the team's processes to streamline and automate. She also uses internal software engineers in Cognite to help build integrations between existing legal tech tools.

Due to her innovative and impressive work with legal tech, Christine was included as a member in the international Digital Legal Exchange program for legal executives throughout the world, and in a Norwegian network that aims to increase innovation among General Counsels. She has been invited to give presentations in the Nordics and the UK on innovative use of legal tech, including at the Economist's General

Summit in London, and on Nordic Legal Tech Day in Copenhagen, Helsinki, and Oslo.

Leadership

Christine demonstrates visionary thought, and impressive leadership. Despite her relatively young age, she is, in addition to Head of Legal and General Counsel, part of Cognite's executive management team, board member in CNTXT (joint venture between Cognite and Saudi Aramco), and board secretary of Cognite's board of directors. In Cognite, Christine is known for her creative, inspiring, and motivating internal communication and change management. Important messages from the legal team are communicated through fun and playful videos to make legal and compliance fun and increase engagement throughout the organisation.

When introducing the first-line legal support chatbot, Christine created a contest where Cogniters could participate to name the chatbot, and after the chatbot was named LISA (Legal Intelligence Support Assistant), Christine created a picture and personality for LISA. Christine managed to inspire Cogniters to use LISA, instead of drowning the legal team with support requests on email and other internal communication platforms.

Q: How have you encouraged long-term resilience within your organization or beyond?

Cognite has experienced rapid growth, expansions to new markets and big organisational changes in the last years, which has demanded a lot from the leaders in Cognite. Christine planned by structuring the legal team to be scalable, and equipped the team with legal tech tools that reduced administrative tasks and enabled them to focus on value-creation.

Handling change management has been key to succeed as a leader in Cognite, and Christine handles this extremely well by getting people motivated and onboard for changes through careful planning and creative communication.

She has a positive and solution-oriented mindset. She has succeeded in her goal to create a legal team perceived by the organisation as being a valuable asset rather than a bottleneck, and she has taken the initiative to help other teams restructure to tackle the organisational growth and increase in workload and complexity, through automated and streamlined processes, and by challenging established ways of working.

Christine has an impressive ability to see and inspire others and to facilitate for her team members' success. She has built a feedback culture in her team for personal and professional growth and introduced 'Productivity Day' involving one day each week with no meetings and limited access to email to enable team members to focus on tasks demanding concentration. She is known for enabling and trusting the more junior lawyers to take on challenging assignments whilst guiding them without micromanaging, which has resulted in a team with highly motivated and competent lawyers ●

Christine has an impressive ability to see and inspire others and to facilitate for her team members' success

The articles that follow are short summaries of webinars we hosted over the last year, each discussing important issues facing women in the workplace – and illustrating the passion and commitment of just a few of the Inspiring Women changing our world today 

Embracing neurodiversity in the workplace

Webinar panel speakers: Abigail Agyei, Natalia Lyckowski, Nikki Mackay and Isabel Parker.

Article author: Anna-Marie Southern.

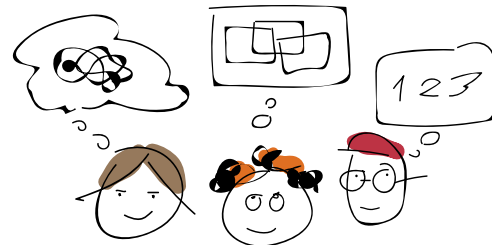
Watch the webinars here:

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In the current landscape of evolving workplace dynamics, there is a growing recognition that diversity goes beyond traditional categories and includes neurodiversity as an integral aspect of fostering innovation and creativity. First, let's start by explaining what we mean by the term 'neurodiverse'. Neurodiversity is a term that wasn't coined until the nineties. Sociologist Judy Singer, who is also on the autistic spectrum, initially brought people together to explore the different ways that people's brains work and interpret information. So, the best way to understand it is to look at those natural variations and differences in how our brains function. It's not a deficit, disorder, or impairment; rather, it's about recognizing the diverse ways we all think. The idea is that one size doesn't fit all.

Secondly, let's discuss why diversity is so important. Why do we focus on aspects like race, sexual orientation, and gender, among other things, in the workplace? It's because diversity leads to innovation. We already know, if everyone thinks the same way, there won't be room for new ideas. Diversity of thought, in the form of neurodiversity, is an important catalyst for innovation.

Consider this: 1 in 20 people are neurodivergent in some way. If you're not focusing on 1 in 20 of your clients, co-workers, friends, and family, you are missing out on a lot. It's been quoted that between 40–80% of college-educated neurodivergent adults are unemployed or underemployed. Why? Is it because, during the interview, they may come across as a little unconventional? Stop for a moment and think – it's actually that uniqueness that we desire! That distinctiveness is the creative energy, the grease that can introduce new ideas. Neurodivergent individuals often possess exceptional skills in areas like pattern recognition, attention to detail, and divergent thinking. These skills can be invaluable assets, contributing to enhanced problem-solving capabilities and fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation.



People's brains work and interpret information in different ways, bringing unique perspectives to the table.

This shift in mindset benefits neurodivergent individuals by providing them with equal opportunities and benefits companies by tapping into a pool of talent that brings unique perspectives to the table.

Our panel of speakers discussed the various ways in which organizations and individuals could contribute to a more thoughtful and inclusive environment. This included organizations implementing inclusive recruitment strategies designed to attract neurodivergent talent, tailoring hiring processes to accommodate diverse communication styles and sensory sensitivities, as well as offering reasonable workplace accommodations, such as flexible work hours, quiet spaces, or sensory-friendly environments. Equipping neurodivergent individuals with assistive technologies and tools is another crucial aspect of creating an inclusive work environment. By providing these resources, organizations empower neurodivergent employees to excel in their roles. On an individual level, patience and understanding are key in fostering effective communication and collaboration. Establishing an inclusive and supportive social environment with open communication channels encourages the expression of concerns and the collaborative resolution of challenges. Mindful language use is equally important, with a focus on choosing words that are inclusive and respectful.

So, what action can we take now?

Abigail: "Please give yourself grace. Be kind to yourself. We tend to be our biggest critics, mostly because we're used to being criticized often. But really, be kind to yourself. For organizations and employees, amplify the voices of your diverse colleagues. Listen to them and give them spaces to share their experiences. Utilize staff networks (if you have them) because they often do amazing work at the heart of organizations. However, make sure you're not leaning on them to do all the work.

Instead, actively lead and participate in that work. Utilize their experiences and knowledge, but also provide resources to ensure the work gets done."

Isabel: "Let's highlight one thing that has become clear throughout this webinar: sharing is key. Sunshine is a great disinfectant, they say, and I think that's absolutely right. Share your experiences with your peers and others. Share them at work. Be proud to celebrate your neurodivergent selves and, if you have them, your children. Be open and share truthfully."

Natalia: "I would say, start with empathy. Have the hard conversations. At IBM, we have a motto of three A's: awareness, acceptance, and advancement. Your journey in this must start with awareness, but awareness is passive. Don't stay there for long. Challenge yourself to act by actively accepting people. Then, go further into advancement, by contributing to a cultural change. You're never going to have it perfect. You'll always have to adjust, but never let that fear stop you."

Embracing neurodiversity in the workplace is not just a matter of social responsibility; it is a strategic move that can revolutionize how companies approach innovation and creativity. By recognizing and harnessing the strengths of neurodivergent individuals, organizations can create a more dynamic, inclusive, and ultimately successful workplace where diversity is accepted and celebrated as a driving force behind progress and achievement ●

"Distinctiveness is the creative energy, the grease that can introduce new ideas"

Nurturing parental and professional success

Webinar panel speakers: Annie Abelman, Sally Guyer, Electra Japonas and Kami Paulsen.

Article author: Anna-Marie Southern.

Watch the webinars here:

www.worldcc.foundation/news-community/our-events/webinars

You've heard about it before and, most likely, have experienced it first-hand; that pesky, ever-difficult 'work-life' balance. As much as we parents constantly strive to find that harmony between career and personal aspirations, we often do so in the face of barriers and obstacles, whether obvious or not, from our employers. The current landscape offers a unique perspective on remote work possibilities post-pandemic. However, conflicting views on remote work, like those expressed by CEOs Elon Musk and Jamie Dimon, add to the uncertainty. Approximately 40% of the current workforce in commerce and contracting is considering leaving due to low job satisfaction, lack of investment in staff, and a sense of operational overload.

Parenting is a demanding yet rewarding responsibility, and when individuals are empowered to navigate the complexities of both parenting and professional life, they are more likely to thrive in both domains. But finding that balance is hard; and that's because we change so much as we become parents. The work-self we had before entering the world of parenthood had its own boundaries, styles, and techniques for getting things done. When we come back from parental leave, everything is different. Your job could be identical, but everything else about your life, priorities, and often your personality is different.

Balance is about readjusting what we thought we knew how to do and then thinking "how do I do this in a whole different way?". In our recent webinar, panellists discussed a constant feeling of anxiety – because you're used to being someone who's always striving to be a high performer and, all of a sudden, you can't perform highly in both roles all the time.

Women tend to take on a lot more responsibility when it comes to children, including the fact that at the beginning of your parental leave, they're usually taking off longer than their partner. Women often end up becoming the default parent; when the child cries, they want mum. When the nursery needs someone, they call mum. So we try to juggle the two and we take a step back from work where necessary. That has a knock-on effect for the rest of your life. Further, this has an impact on a societal level. When we talk about the systemic gender pay gap, it really stems from this disparity between the gender parental leave gap. The most obvious example of success is in Sweden where there is equal paternity and maternity leave, or partner leave. The culture is one where it's frowned upon not to take the full partner leave because you're neglecting your responsibility to care for your child, bond with your child, and be part of their lives. A mental shift is needed, and senior leaders who are not the birthing parent can lead by example and take that extended time.



Achieving a work-life balance is crucial for parents, and also critical for employers to value and acknowledge.

As much as it is crucial for parents to achieve a harmonious balance between their career and parenting, it is also critical for employers to foster a culture that values and acknowledges this effort. Employers can do better by having a two-year vision of how they see an employee leave and return to the business. If they don't, and they let people drop off because they don't bring them back in a useful way, there is a huge cost to the business in terms of recruitment, talent loss, and insights. It's about making sure that leaders and managers are trained to understand what's needed and have a buy-in and a vision for that person. Companies that actively cultivate an environment conducive to both parental and professional success are finding themselves at the forefront of a progressive and inclusive workplace culture. It's about saying, "we're a company that invests in parents, and we know that it might be chaotic for a year or so when you come back, but you're worth keeping, and we value what you've got to bring back to the business".

Electra's takeaway:

"One of my key takeaways is taking responsibility to some extent for your own return to work and the way that you approach your parenthood. So, taking responsibility and being really clear about your needs and voicing that, I think is key."

Kami's takeaway:

"I think it's important for us to model the behaviour that we want to see both within our organization and how we work with parents. Modelling openness, dialogue, and acceptance, and being very open about the conversation and the needs that you have and the needs that your employer has. The more that we can communicate and talk and be open – transparency is so important."

Annie's takeaway:

"It's probably about the courage to continue pushing. There is no one-size-fits-all; that's the point. It's just how can you keep being you and have your own integrity in your work life. Because the one thing I find is that there's such a loss of identity and validation when we step away from work or have to dial down work for family, even though being a parent gives you a different kind of validation. You don't always get the credit at the time. But we can really be courageous as we strive to continue to do both."

To conclude, the intersection of parental and professional success is not just a 'personal challenge' but a societal imperative. Organizations play a pivotal role in shaping a culture that values the contributions of working parents and provides the necessary support for them to thrive in both spheres. By doing so, companies not only contribute to the well-being of their employees but also actively participate in creating a more equitable and inclusive society ●

"In Sweden, there is equal paternity, maternity, or partner leave – and its frowned upon not to take the full leave"

Advancing gender equality in procurement and supply chains

Webinar panel speakers: Sally Guyer and Cynthia Muffah.

Article author: Anna-Marie Southern.

Watch the webinars here:

www.worldcc.foundation/news-community/our-events/webinars

A business imperative for a diverse and inclusive future

In the dynamic landscape of global commerce, the critical importance of integrating gender considerations into procurement practices is emerging as a transformative dialogue. No longer confined to the realm of moral imperatives, the pursuit of gender equality and social inclusion in supply chains has evolved into a compelling business essential, reshaping the future of procurement and supply chain management.

Achieving gender equality in procurement and supply chains extends beyond simply meeting ethical standards; it is a strategic move that aligns with the broader goals of sustainable business practices. A diverse and inclusive supply chain demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility and serves as a catalyst for innovation, resilience, and increased market competitiveness.

Organizations cannot afford to be left behind. Stakeholders, including customers, employees, and investors increasingly prioritize companies that show their commitment to a better future. Sooner than we think, advancing gender equality in procurement and supply chains will be a compulsory element of business. It's time to get on board.

To strategically incorporate gender considerations into procurement practices, organizations must go beyond superficial efforts and embrace a comprehensive approach. This involves examining the entire supply chain process, from sourcing raw materials to the delivery of the final product. Key ways to strategically incorporate gender considerations include:

1. Supplier diversity programs

Implementing and promoting supplier diversity programs that actively seek out and support businesses owned or led by women. This approach fosters inclusivity as well as stimulating economic growth within diverse communities.

2. Inclusive supplier assessments

Integrating gender-sensitive criteria into supplier assessments to dually evaluate the quality and cost-effectiveness of products and the suppliers' commitment to gender equality, fair labour practices, and diversity in their workforce.

3. Capacity building and training

Providing capacity-building programs and training initiatives for suppliers to enhance their understanding of gender-related issues and foster a culture of inclusivity within their operations.

Collaboration is key to promoting gender equality in procurement and supply chains. By forging strategic partnerships, organizations can leverage collective strengths to drive positive change across industries. Some potential partnership-driven strategies which encourage collaboration include:

1. Industry collaboration

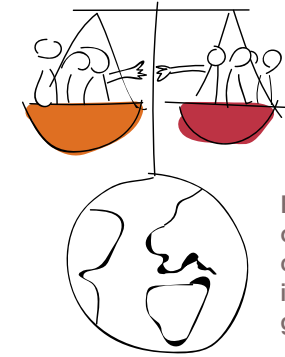
Collaborating with industry peers, associations, and NGOs to share best practices, develop industry standards, and collectively address gender disparities within supply chains.

2. Educational initiatives

Partnering with educational institutions to create programs that encourage women to pursue careers in procurement and supply chain management, thus expanding the pool of qualified and diverse talent.

3. Supplier engagement forums

Establishing forums where suppliers, buyers, and other stakeholders can engage in open dialogues, share experiences, and collaboratively identify opportunities to enhance gender equality in the supply chain.



By considering gender, organizations can contribute to a more inclusive and equitable global marketplace.

By strategically incorporating gender considerations and embracing partnership-driven strategies, organizations can foster positive change that transcends individual businesses, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable global marketplace. This commitment reflects a dedication to social responsibility and positions businesses to thrive in an environment where diversity and inclusivity are not just values but fundamental drivers of success ●

“Advancing gender equality will soon be compulsory in business. It’s time to get on board”

Pride or prejudice: is media friend or foe?

Webinar panel speakers: Bernadette Bulacan, Ciaran Fenton, Sally Guyer, Barry Hooper and Janet Taylor-Hall. Article author: Anna-Marie Southern.

Watch the webinars here:

www.worldcc.foundation/news-community/our-events/webinars

In an ocean of information, news, and media we're talking about faux pas headlines and the systemic, negative language so frequently used.

Too often there continues to be a negative connection between being a woman and being in business. Take the BBC's retracted headline *Can women have it all?* regarding New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Arden's resignation and more recently CNN's Don Lemon who commented that GOP candidate Nikki Haley was no longer 'in her prime'. Unfortunately, you don't need to look very far to find more examples.

For centuries 'calling it out' has functioned as a tool to reveal injustices and the need for reform. How can we benefit from a 'call-out culture' without succumbing to the toxicity and futility that can be associated with it? Are we being too sensitive? Maybe, or maybe not!



It's time to 'be the change'.

The fact is that bias, stereotypes, and discrimination are a reality, so let's talk about the action that's needed to create a world that is diverse, equitable and inclusive.

In this article, we explore five key themes:

1. Unveiling media biases and stereotypes

Sally kicks off the discussion by shedding light on the overwhelming examples of negative narratives surrounding women in business and politics. With this, she sets the stage for a conversation on the prevalence of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination against women, laying bare the reality that women's experiences and needs remain largely invisible in powerful realms such as politics and economics. Drawing from research supported by the UN Development Program, Sally highlights the male-centric portrayal of the world in the media.

There is a stark truth here – the media inadequately promotes gender equality awareness. The absence of gender equality topics further indicates a failure to influence systemic and structural changes in society. In this context, Ciaran references the persisting misogyny deeply rooted in centuries of patriarchy. He calls for zero tolerance noting that change requires a resolute stance and a consistent effort to call out unacceptable behaviour.

2. Allyship as a catalyst for change

The webinar shifts its focus to the vital role of allyship in effecting positive change. Bernadette, whose passion lies in inspiring women in the technology space, highlights the unintended impact of well-intentioned yet misguided comments, often referred to as microaggressions. Her insights illuminate the challenges women face in responding to such instances, considering the context, and setting.

Ciaran echoes the importance of allyship, emphasizing that creating change involves expressing outrage at unacceptable behaviour. He introduces the concept of a well-established triad in behavioural change, suggesting that calling out misogyny must be done without shaming or aggression. The role of the majority being allies becomes crucial in fostering an environment where women feel supported and heard.

3. Media's dual role: Friend or foe?

The scrutiny of media's influence continues with a critical analysis of headlines and articles that perpetuate stereotypes and undermine the professional capabilities of women. Sally points out absurdities like a recent Times article titled *Super fit in mid-life: How to get a CEO body, 16 foods all men should be eating*, revealing the blatant gender bias in such reporting. Why is the assumption here that all CEOs are male?

Janet reinforces the significance of role modelling in driving change. She stresses the need for authenticity in understanding the intent behind diversity statistics presented by organizations. Her call to scrutinize the impact of tangible changes and amplify success stories underscores the importance of showcasing positive examples to counterbalance negative narratives.

4. Challenges and opportunities for positive action

As the discussion progresses, the speakers delve into the challenges women face in various professional spheres. Bernadette highlights the disparity in the representation of women as experts in media coverage related to COVID-19. Women are often depicted as eyewitnesses or personal stories, not as experts or leaders. Why?

Barry draws attention to the impact of menopause on career journeys, urging organizations to consider their approach to menopause in the workplace. This brings to light the multifaceted challenges faced by women and the need for comprehensive and inclusive policies that recognize different life stages.

5. Driving positive change: A call to action

The webinar concludes with a resounding call to action. Sally emphasizes the importance of being the change, fostering open conversations, and acknowledging the challenges women face at different stages of their careers. The speakers agree on the need for a fundamental shift in organizational design to accommodate a more inclusive and equitable workforce.

Achieving the right balance is challenging, but continually calling out issues where we see them is a positive thing. There is a need for ongoing concerted efforts to drive meaningful change in this space. As we navigate this complex landscape, the resounding message is clear: it is time for collective action, genuine allyship, and a relentless commitment to dismantling the barriers that perpetuate gender inequality ●

“BE the change. Acknowledge the challenges women face”

Cultivating leadership excellence: exploring role models and mentoring

Webinar panel speakers: Nikki Mackay, Allison Ramirez, and Darya Swaby.

Article author: Anna-Marie Southern.

Watch the webinars here:

www.worldcc.foundation/news-community/our-events/webinars

Great leaders are not born; they are developed. The evolution from an aspiring individual to a great leader is not a matter of inherent qualities but a journey marked by intentional personal growth, inspiration from role models, and the valuable guidance of mentors. In this webinar our panel used their personal experiences with mentors and /or role models to illustrate the role they can play:

1. Guidance

Role models and mentors provide valuable advice based on their experiences, helping others navigate challenges and make informed decisions. The mentor-mentee relationship is a unique one. Just because one person is the mentor, and the other is the mentee doesn't mean both parties don't need the balance of nurturing each other – we all have something to learn. Those mentees will someday be mentors themselves!

As a mentee, it's crucial to be open to various mentors, even those who may seem different from you. Embrace the opportunity to explore those differences, as it is what will propel you forward. Keeping yourself open to exploring everyone's potential, possibilities, and stories is essential –

otherwise, you're holding yourself back. There's a wealth of knowledge out there, and you must be willing to build relationships with people, even those who have differences, to gain from those diverse perspectives. As a mentor, you have to engage in the development process with your mentee by actively listening to their experiences. It's then simply about sharing experiences and knowledge – the good, the bad, the ugly, the successes, and the failures. Going through the ups and downs of the roller coaster is part of the journey, and it's crucial to understand that development takes time.

2. Inspiration

Observing the success and achievements of role models can inspire individuals to set ambitious goals and strive for excellence in their own pursuits. Role models play pivotal roles in shaping aspiring leaders; they serve as beacons of inspiration, guiding individuals through the intricacies of leadership. Many times, our leaders are these highly successful, top-level individuals, and we forget that they are humans as well. It's okay to be vulnerable sometimes, and it's okay to lack confidence or seek support; that's part of the human experience. This knowledge really helps illustrate the idea "I can do that too. I can aspire to that. And I can achieve more if I follow their beacon of light".



"I can do that. I can achieve more if I follow their beacon of light".

3. Support

Mentors offer emotional support and encouragement, helping individuals build confidence and resilience in the face of obstacles. There are moments of self-doubt and vulnerability when one questions their ability to continue and excel in their field. The support of mentors is invaluable because it is impossible to do it all on your own.

Darya spoke to the way in which her mentors recognized the challenges she faced as a woman with various responsibilities but encouraged her by acknowledging her potential. The significance lies in someone reaching out and saying, "I see your potential, and I believe in you".

Allison discussed her feeling that striving to be your better self is essential for everyone. You can always do better tomorrow, even if today was a bit wonky or didn't play out the way you wanted. It's important to keep encouraging yourself too.

4. Learning from Experience

Role models and mentors share their experiences, allowing others to learn from both successes and failures, accelerating their personal and professional growth. The world has undergone significant evolution over the past two decades, necessitating leaders to stay at the forefront of trends and comprehend societal shifts. Recognizing the phenomenal generational diversity in the workforce is crucial. Each decade introduces new dynamics, requiring leaders to adapt their approaches, engage in different conversations, and align with new values. There's so much diversity of knowledge and ideas that generations can learn from each other. To be effective leaders, we must proactively keep up with these changes and enhance our skills through continuous improvement. The more you know, the more you understand, and the more you can influence.

All in all, this leadership journey is multifaceted, weaving together the threads of personal growth, inspiration gleaned from role models, and the insightful guidance of mentors. Embracing or offering a little help along the way ensures not only individual success but also contributes to the creation of resilient, adaptive, and inspiring leaders capable of guiding organizations into the future. These elements collectively contribute to the building blocks of leadership excellence ●

"Great leaders are not born; they are developed"

Thank you to the committee

Madeline Albright famously said, “*There’s a special place in hell for women who don’t support other women*”. She followed that very famous statement with this: “*In a society where women often feel pressured to tear one another down, our saving grace lies in our willingness to lift one another up*”.

Our wonderful Inspiring Women committee exemplify this willingness and our program is made possible through their commitment and contribution. As a committee we want to shine a light on the achievements of women around the world, we want to provide them with a platform to share their experience and expertise and to provide much needed inspiration to so many. I am constantly lifted up by this program and by this wonderful group of women who make up our committee, thank you so much for all that you do.

[#StrongerTogether](#)

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Closing thoughts

Over the last year I have had the privilege to mentor some fabulous women. Women who I absolutely envisage being part of our Inspiring Women program in the future. I had a final in-person catch-up with one of my mentees in December. She asked me how I managed balancing career and family. My response: it hadn’t been easy, but it’s eminently possible. Here I am today with two grown up sons who I am immensely proud of and who I know are proud of me. I reflected on that conversation in the days that followed and felt a heavy weight bearing down on me. It remains a sad truth that it is almost uniquely women who challenge themselves with the question “Can I have a family and still have a career?” I am not sure I know of a man who has done the same.



As we navigate the complexities of career, family and work structures, we must challenge whether we are truly creating inclusive work places.

During the pandemic years, for many women remote working often meant the difference between chaos and sanity. It allowed them to hide the evidence of competing priorities at home – a fact that often proved positive for their careers. As organizations around the world consider their policies on remote working, they equally need to consider the law of unintended consequences. Huge swathes of women stand to be negatively impacted by ill thought through policies. As Rachel Thomas, co-founder, and CEO of LeanIn.org said “People think it’s mutually exclusive to be really ambitious and committed to your career and also demand flexibility. I just want to say out loud *I don’t think they’re at odds with one another.*” My typical answer to “If you had a superpower what would it be?” is “Teleporting”! If companies are being honest with themselves, they need to admit that remote working is the closest thing to teleporting we’ve got!

As we navigate the complexities of career, family commitments, and evolving work structures, we must constantly challenge whether we are truly creating work places that promote inclusivity. It is my fervent hope that the stories shared and the broader Inspiring Women initiative, inspire a collective commitment to fostering environments where everyone can thrive personally and professionally. Let us forge ahead with the shared understanding that true progress lies not in the absence of challenges but in our resilience and determination to overcome them, paving the way for a more equitable and empowered future ●

Sally Guyer

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 WorldCC

World Commerce & Contracting is a not-for-profit association dedicated to helping its global members achieve high-performing and trusted trading relationships. With 75,000 members from over 20,000 across 180 countries worldwide, the association welcomes everyone with an interest in better contracting: business leaders, practitioners, experts and newcomers. It is independent, provocative and disciplined existing for its members, the contracting community and society at large.

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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.

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