



## **W-Power - Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in sparsely populated Northern communities**

W-Power works with women entrepreneurs in sparsely populated areas across Northern and Arctic communities, encouraging them to set-up, develop and grow their businesses.

The project will achieve this through capacity building and providing opportunities for transnational learning as well as creating and piloting a gender-aware business support concept.

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## **International Women's Day - shine brightly ladies! An invitation to participate in W-Power's International Women's Day video series**

How do we forge a gender equal world and raise awareness against bias?

We say, "**celebrate women's brilliant achievements**".

This year's pledge for International Women's Day is **#ChooseToChallenge#**

From challenge comes change. So, yes let's.

But don't limit your challenges. Challenge your limits!



**Karen Lindsay of Oban Beer Seller in her shop**

**W-Power are offering all our members the opportunity to shine**

Showcase your business and your woman-ness in the face of challenge.

Join us and celebrate your achievements and share some of your challenges, overcome or ongoing.

We welcome you to record a short video to share with other women entrepreneurs. This exchange of stories will be shared by and between women here in Argyll and Internationally. We will be sharing these videos throughout the month of March starting on International Women's Day on 8th March.

**Let's be proud of what we are and let's inspire with our triumphs.**

We all still face many challenges in our lives, business or personal. The theme is encouraging us to **choose to challenge** an inequality or stumbling block in our lives and to support others through these by example.

**What are we looking for?** A short video, typically 2 minutes or less, filmed in landscape format (if using a phone) and sent to us through our Administrator, Kate MacDonald at [wpowerargyll@gmail.com](mailto:wpowerargyll@gmail.com). The content is up to you but you might like to include your name, business, location and some challenges you've faced and hopefully overcome during your business journey. What would you say to women starting out? Who's been your inspiration/role model?

**Why should I do this?** It's an opportunity to promote your business, share the challenges you've overcome and to encourage other women to take the leap and grow their business and their confidence in doing so. W-Power is all about networking, learning, sharing and inspiring each other and a lot of that is sharing how we've overcome our fears, finances and facing our own learning curves and challenges.

**What will we do with the videos?** We aim to publish a series of videos during March starting off with International Women's Day on March 8th. We'll initially publish them on our W-Power Slack platform then onto other social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. We'd also encourage you to share them through your own social media channels.

**When do we need these by?** Please send your videos to Kate MacDonald at [wpowerargyll@gmail.com](mailto:wpowerargyll@gmail.com) by Friday 5th March, sooner if your time allows. Final deadline is Friday, 12th March. If you need any other information, please get in touch.

- Share your video with the world via your own social media using the hashtag #IWD2021
- More information on the IWD 2021 theme is available [via this link](#)

**Want to get inspired? See Cara Gelati's " i am also woman" video [here](#)**

**Thank you in advance from the W-Power group in Argyll, Scotland!**

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**Introducing W-Power project partners, entrepreneurs and business stories:**  
**Amazing women working to empower and inspire all women.**



**From March 2020 onwards one of our Project Partners, Elizabeth Johnson from the Pure Energy Centre volunteered in her local community by delivering medicines three times a week to her fellow islanders. She did this in addition to working full time until November when the local doctors surgery opened again for patients to collect their meds themselves.**

As a result of this volunteering Elizabeth won a Community Spirit Award, details of which are below:

Congratulations to Elizabeth Johnson from Uyeasound, Unst on being a recipient of Shetland Community Spirit Award.

Elizabeth was nominated for delivering prescriptions on behalf of the community during Lockdown and beyond. She did this along with other lasses from Unst who did deliveries too, whilst holding down not just one but two jobs.

**Best wishes and well done! Thank you for showing such brilliant community spirit.**

**#shetlandcommunityspiritaward**



**Business story from Jokkmokk - Patricia Swiersta, the hostess and entrepreneur of Skabram Camping and Stugby**

My name is Patricia Swierstra and I am running the Skabram Camping and Stugby in Jokkmokk, Swedish Lapland. I worked for 10 years as a senior assistant accountant and three years as a self-employed consult in Leeuwarden, Holland. When we got a possibility to start a new carrier, me and my husband Richard decided to take the change and moved in April 2018 over 2000km north, from Holland to North Sweden. We had visited Sweden and Jokkmokk earlier, and found the town as an attractive place to live and work as entrepreneurs. For some time, I had also had a wish to spend more time with my husband and son and we saw the camping as a good possibility to work together as a family.

Skabram Stugby and Camping is located only 3km from Jokkmokks centre at Skabram lake. We offer all year around accommodation in six cabins and three bed and breakfast rooms and spots for caravans and tents. The attraction of our cosy camping is our location close to nature, silence and all the animals we have also here.

The pandemic has not affected our business as bad as I was afraid of. It was naturally a shock when we mid-March 2020 noticed, that one booking after the another one was cancelled. Suddenly everything became uncertain. However, during the summer lots of Swedish people was visiting our camping instead of Middle-Europeans, and the autumn was even better than expected.

I feel unsure of the future. I believe that people still have a strong need to travel but it will last until late summer or longer before the travelling will normalize. I also believe that people will have more expectations for their "first" holidays after pandemic and perhaps ask higher security and standard for the services. Unfortunately, it doesn't directly mean that there would be space for higher prices because the pandemic has also had a negative impact for incomes. I hope that I can continue to develop Skabram camping and Stugby in a sustainable way which takes concern the nature but challenges also the visitors to take more responsibility of their habits and behaviour.

I participated the W-Power thematic seminar in Jokkmokk November 2019 and some of the Business by women breakfast meetings. I just got some information about the coming online thematic week in March. That sounds interesting!

**Patricia was interviewed by Päivi Sainio-Rohner**  
**W-Power Swedish partner, STRUKTURUM Jokkmokk**

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**Katherine Lanteigne is the Director of Women in Business New Brunswick (WBNB) our W-Power associate partner from Canada. WBNB assists current and aspiring women entrepreneurs in reaching their full potential as business owners by delivering quality, innovative and inclusive counseling and services. This partner joined the W-Power project in 2019 as their province and its women entrepreneurs were identifying the exact same challenges as the participating W-Power partners and its entrepreneurs.**

With an impressive background in management, economic development, entrepreneurship and community involvement, Katherine obtained a Bachelor of Business Administration, with a concentration in Marketing, a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Canada and a Master in Human Resources (Second Master) from Université de Poitiers in France.

Collaboration is second nature to this dynamic and diplomatic individual. Whether in her experience with the Chaleur Chamber of Commerce or the Regional Airport, Katherine has always worked in direct partnerships with boards of directors. In 2016, she was elected to represent Bathurst, as a City Councillor. She is responsible for making key decisions pertaining to budgets as well as short and long-term strategic planning.

In 2017, along with her husband and business partner, this entrepreneur launched her passion project “Au Bootlegger”, a vibrant establishment dedicated to serving her region’s largest assortment of craft beers, right in the heart of downtown Bathurst. In a short time, they have developed a loyal patronage.

More recently in 2019, they created and opened a café of the name Kaffeine Espresso Bar as well as becoming a franchisee of a Canadian food chain called Pita Pit both in the heart of downtown Bathurst, community of approximately 12 000 people. Before even celebrating their first year in business, COVID-19 hit and turned their world upside down personally and for their businesses, especially since all 3 businesses were in the food and beverage industry. Like many businesses they have pivoted from a sit-down restaurant/bar to curb side pickup and delivery business. Although it has been incredibly challenging making it through the first year for these businesses and going through the pandemic, the good news is that they are still open and working hard to overcome this challenge. Approaching International Women's Day, Katherine mentions she is grateful that she is surrounded by a strong network of women and that she's a partner organization in the W-Power project.

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**Yvette Bérubé obtained a Bachelor of Business Administration with a concentration in small and medium size businesses and has a background in business ethics, entrepreneurship and finance.**

She worked for over 20 years in the Canadian banking industry as a mortgage and loans officer, administrative manager and in 2001, she became a Financial Planner for the National Bank of Canada. While banking was her passion, in 2009, she accepted a teaching position at the Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick in the Business Administration program.

Outside her teaching schedule, she quickly started coaching students who were members of the college business club. In the past several years, her teams have scored national titles and have represented Canada in international business pitching competitions.

She is a board member for the National Entrepreneurial Association for Canadian Francophone Post Secondary Students and is treasurer and for a non-for-profit Dance School.

Where does she let go of all the stress and challenges of everyday life? On the dance floor where else. She has taught tap dancing to women and girls for over 30 years and hopefully will be doing it for another 30 years.

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**My name is Helena Puhakka-Tarvainen and I am the project manager of the W-Power project consortium. My background is in rural development, I have been volunteering in women-related NGOs, and I nowadays run my own [hotel business](#), thus W-Power combines all these aspects in a wonderful way.**

My career as a senior project manager with several projects has showed me that the SMEs are the key actors in keeping the societies running and offering the well-being by providing jobs. Same aspects are even emphasized in rural regions: a single new company can boost the community to the next level.

Thus, year after year I got more and more excited about being an entrepreneur also myself – just the business idea missing. Then suddenly, my colleague Maria introduced me an exciting idea of setting-up a boutique hotel in our city. After a long course of planning and reshuffle we made it up and running! And despite of the COVID, we are still here.

Our concept is now proven by our guests and they like it (very proud of the high scores in feedback surveys), but must be still afraid of how long the crisis lasts and people avoid travelling. The best possible future is that our hotel would still be here in a decade, providing jobs and living to the community.

Something I have learned during this journey of being an entrepreneur is the importance of networks and peer-support: when you are out of bed linens in a bank holiday or need urgently somebody to share your pain of struggling business – it's another (woman) entrepreneur who understands you the best.

**The Irish Thematic Week will run from Tuesday 23rd March to Thursday the 25th.**

It will bring together female entrepreneurs and innovation and business support eco-system stakeholders from all regions associated with the W-Power project: Iceland, Ireland, Scotland (including the Shetlands), Sweden, Finland and Canada incorporating a series of matchmaking, networking, learning/upskilling, and capacity building sessions.

**Events open to female entrepreneurs and other stakeholders include:**

- Information session about the support of W-Power projects, including a segment on best practice for networking and practical tips
- Virtual networking with a platform supporting individual matchmaking between participants, based around common interests, collaboration opportunities and common challenges with opportunities for knowledge exchange and transnational cooperation.
- Interactive panel discussions, incorporating two key topics relevant to female entrepreneurs: importance of role models as a positive influencing factor on entrepreneurial motivation and development, as well as a panel discussing the relevance and impact of peer female entrepreneur networks, different models, best practice, and motivation for taking part
- On the last day, 2 workshops will take place - one offering insights and practical advice on the topic of digital marketing support and maximise opportunities for entrepreneurs in the virtual environment, and the second workshop will provide the insight around creating new streams of income by productising your knowledge and skills into online training courses, profitably and from scratch

All participants can mix & match and attend as much or as little of the event and matchmaking and networking facility is offered in a flexible way with entrepreneurs being able to schedule around their busy life. We look forward to welcoming everyone.

**[REGISTER HERE NOW!](#)**



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# Irish Thematic Seminar Week

23rd – 25th March 2021

Online via  b2match

NETWORKING | PANEL DISCUSSIONS | WORKSHOPS | B2B MATCHMAKING

Empower. Network. Grow.

Empowering women entrepreneurs in sparsely populated communities

## Irish Thematic Seminar Week – Agenda

TUESDAY 23RD MARCH 2021

Irish Standard Time

**9.30am–10.30am**

### Introductory Session - Welcome!

Welcome to the W-Power Project: Helena Puhakka-Tarvainen  
Introduction to the Irish Thematic Seminar Week: Helena Deane, WestBIC  
Networking Information and Tips – Noreen D'Arcy, D'arcy Marketing & PR

**10.30am–11am**

### Matchmaking: Bilateral Meetings

1:1 scheduled meetings - Network and meet fellow female entrepreneurs and stakeholders

**11am–12pm**

### Workshop 1: Digital Marketing

Practical tips & information on how you can better promote your business through online channels and social media by Nicola Barrett, Mark Anthony Brands International

**12pm–5pm**

### Matchmaking: Bilateral Meetings

1:1 scheduled meetings - Network and meet fellow female entrepreneurs and stakeholders



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## Irish Thematic Seminar Week – Agenda

WEDNESDAY 24TH MARCH 2021

Irish Standard Time

### 9am–11.30am — **Panel Discussions: Role Models & Peer Networks**

**Role Models:** The importance of role models as a positive influencing factor on entrepreneurial motivation and development

**Peer Female Entrepreneur Networks:** The relevance and impact of peer female entrepreneur networks, different models, best practice, and motivation for taking part in such networks.

The panel discussions will be facilitated by Susan HayesCulleton, CFA. Susan is co-founder of The Positive Economist, Associate Lecturer at Ulster University, host of "Fantastic Female Fridays" and presenter of the Savvy Women Online podcast.

### 11.30am–5pm — **Matchmaking: Bilateral Meetings**

1:1 scheduled meetings - Network and meet fellow female entrepreneurs and stakeholders



## Irish Thematic Seminar Week – Agenda

THURSDAY 25TH MARCH 2021

Irish Standard Time

### 9.30am–11am — **Workshop 2: Training-as-a-Product- How to commercialise your know-how & experience**

Meg O'Gara of MegnificentCreative.com will explore how you can establish a business based on the commercialisation of your own know-how and experience - creating additional income streams.

Meg will delve into the challenges and opportunities such a business idea presents.

### 11.30am–5pm — **Matchmaking: Bilateral Meetings**

1:1 scheduled meetings - Network and meet fellow female entrepreneurs and stakeholders





## W-Power Inspiring Women in Business Podcast Season 2

W-Power proudly presents:  
**Inspiring Women in Business podcast series**

"W-Power Inspiring Women in Business Podcast shares the stories of some of the amazing women around the project area who are part of this project and their journeys in business".  
— The Host of podcast Jennifer Macdonald-Nethercott, MCIM Chartered Marketer / Strath Communications.

W-Power works with women entrepreneurs in sparsely populated areas across northern Europe and the Arctic rim, encouraging them to set-up, develop and grow their businesses. The project seeks to achieve this through capacity building and providing opportunities for transnational connections and learning.

[Listen podcast here](#)

**Episode 1**  
Cheryl Jamieson  
Glansin Glass

**Episode 2**  
Kate Suopajarvi  
Arctic Cherry

**Episode 3**  
Marianne Hoppu  
Narskuttelu Oy

**Episode 4**  
Aveline O'Sullivan  
Bloom in a Box

**Episode 5**  
Lyne Chantal Boudreau  
Bibilyn Designs

**Episode 6**  
Anna Kuhmonen  
Silba-Silba

W-Power Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme European Union

[Listen to the W-Power Podcast here](#)

Our series features amazing women who have overcome the challenges posed by their remote geography to set up thriving small businesses. All of them have received support of one kind or another from W-Power. These podcasts have been created to share the stories of business women from across the Arctic rim and to hear from them about growing and running businesses in some of the most remote regions of Northern Europe.

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## Networking:

Join in our international [LinkedIn community](#)

Also find us on:

internet [w-powerproject.eu](http://w-powerproject.eu)

Facebook [facebook.com/wpowerproject](https://facebook.com/wpowerproject)

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/wpowerproject/>



## W-Power LinkedIn

### International Online-Networking Group for Women Entrepreneurs



#### Why join?

Connect with like-minded female entrepreneurs - in this group you can ask questions, exchange knowledge and even perhaps create new business opportunities with international peers.

Female founders who are part of this business community habitually adopt a more positive outlook about business growth and being part of this network can boost your confidence, give you inspiration, support and advice, as well as business exposure.

#### Who should join?

Established female entrepreneurs, as well as would-be-entrepreneurs are encouraged to join. The group is actively facilitated by partners in the European Interreg project W-Power. W-Power is a diverse international group that engages women entrepreneurs and representatives of business support organizations in sparsely populated areas across Northern and Arctic communities, including Ireland, Scotland, Shetlands, Island, Sweden, Finland and Canada.

#### How to join?

Create a LinkedIn profile and join the group here

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8725639/>

If you need any help with joining the group, kindly contact: [satu.mustonen@karelia.fi](mailto:satu.mustonen@karelia.fi)





W-Power project videopresentation





### **Data protection policy**

You have registered as a newsletter recipient at some of W-Power Events or by sending us e-mail.

In case you wish to unsubscribe, please contact [sini.yli-suvanto@lapinamk.fi](mailto:sini.yli-suvanto@lapinamk.fi)

**Please see Lapland University of Applied Sciences project management [data protection policy statement](#)**

