

# EVENT invitation

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**WIPO Regional Conference**  
**Women in Asia-Pacific: Innovating for a Better World**  
8 March 2022

*“There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women.” – Kofi Annan*

Providing network support for innovation and entrepreneurship and expanding it is certainly one way of empowering women.

Join us this **International Women’s Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March** as WIPO honors women entrepreneurs and innovators from the Asia-Pacific region who strive and innovate for a better world- a world that is healthier, greener, safer and equitable. These inspiring women, along with regional and local social enterprises, support groups and networks, will join forces with government officials, IP Offices, academia/R&D industry, and WIPO for positive change

Networking initiatives like entrepreneurial workshops, support groups, and mentoring programmes are effective interventions not only in the early stages of entrepreneurial process but also for the management and growth of the venture. Right from idea validation to the launch of that idea and its growth, there are a multitude of reasons that can slow down or halt the innovation journey of a woman ranging from restrictive social norms and gender stereotyping to lack of access to finance, and institutional setting unawareness. Sometimes, it is the timely identification of the resources (including the intellectual property created in the course of business activities) and someone to help them assess the level of innovation of their business. Other times it is the opening of latent and untapped resources, and negotiating to get into business that could help in the growth of the new venture.

This is where WIPO’s one day regional event formulated on the impact of networking communities for women takes relevance, with the ultimate objective of providing more connections to aspiring entrepreneurs and the end-users of IP. The webinar will see selected women innovators/entrepreneurs and associations/network groups from the Asia-Pacific region, government officials, IP officials, and WIPO officials share experiences, present best practices from the region, and networking outcomes and entrepreneurial benefits.

**Keynote address:** Ms. Lisa Jorgenson, Deputy Director General, Patents and Technology Sector, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and IP and Gender Champion of WIPO.

**Speakers:**

- Dr. Neelika Malavige, Head of the Department of Immunology and Molecular Medicine, University of Sri Jayewardenepura; and Assistant Commissioner, Sri Lanka Inventors Commission (Sri Lanka)
- Dr. Prativa Pandey, Founder and CEO, Catalyst Technology Pvt Ltd. (Kathmandu, Nepal)
- Ms. Mohana Priya S., Founder and Proprietor, Kapala Helmets (Coimbatore, India)
- Dr. Merlinda A. Palencia, CEO, Envigor Natural Products Mfg. Inc. (Philippines)
- Ms. Betty Zhao, Co-founder, FengEn Tech Shanghai, Club Dreambuilder, and Ladies Who Tech Ladies Who Tech (Beijing, China)
- Ms. Leena Pishé Thomas, Director, Global Business Inroads (Bengaluru, India)
- Ms. Yendi Amalia, CEO, Wordsmith Group, and Founder, WeMean Business (Jakarta, Indonesia)
- Ms. Lisa F. Vaai, Creative Director, Eveni Carruthers, Apia, Samoa
- Ms. Esther Bates, Senior Project Management Officer, Pacific Green Entrepreneurs Network, Global Green Growth Institute.
- Ms. Anjali Aeri, PCT International Cooperation Division; Patents & Technology Sector, WIPO
- Ms. Deepa Liyanage, Secretary, State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Training, Research and Innovation (Sri Lanka)
- Ms. Lolibeth R. Medrano, Director, Bureau of Patents, Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines.
- Ms. Vindya Wijesinghe, Innovation Officer, National Innovation Agency, Sri Lanka

Closing Remarks and the Way Forward: Women Innovators in Networked Communities: connecting and mobilizing women for positive change

- Mr. Andrew M. Ong, Director, Division for Asia and the Pacific, Regional and National Development Sector, WIPO

Register for the 8 March Conference here:

[https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting\\_id=69368](https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=69368)

**Speakers**



Ms. Lisa Jorgenson

Ms. Lisa Jorgenson is the Deputy Director General, Patents and Technology Sector at the World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva, Switzerland which administers the Patent Cooperation Treaty. She also manages patent and technology legislative and policy advice and programs relating to the law of patents. She is the first female in this role and is one of three female Deputy Director Generals appointed on January 1, 2021. Ms. Jorgenson has also been appointed WIPO's first IP and Gender Champion, a new role aimed at encouraging female engagement with Intellectual Property. She was previously the Executive Director at the American Intellectual Property Law Association in Arlington, VA and the Group Vice President, Intellectual Property and Licensing at STMicroelectronics in Coppel, Texas.



Prof Neelika Malavige

Prof Neelika Malavige is the Head of the Department of Immunology and Molecular Medicine, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka and an academic visitor at the University of Oxford. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the International Society of Infectious Diseases since 2020 and a member of the technical advisory group to the WHO-COVID-19 technology access pool. She is Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in London the Royal College of Pathologists in 2015. She serves as an expert member on several government COVID-19 related technical advisory groups.

She leads a large research group working on dengue, and COVID-19, and her work on dengue has focused on factors that lead to severe dengue, identification of biomarkers and mediators of vascular leak in dengue. Her work on COVID-19 is mainly related to immune responses to COVID-19 vaccines, immunopathogenesis and determining correlates of protection against COVID-19. She has strong research collaborations with University of Oxford and her laboratory is a part of the A2CARES, which is one of the Centers for Research in Emerging Infectious Diseases. She also serves as the Assistant Commissioner of Sri Lanka Inventors Commission.



Dr Prativa Pandey

Dr. Prativa Pandey, Founder/CEO of Catalyst Technology and Herveda Botanicals, is a researcher and a science entrepreneur. She is a researcher at Research Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology and a visiting faculty at RECAST, TU. Her research is focused on the value addition of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants of Nepal. She has a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry and Certificate in Management from Northwestern University, USA. She has 15 years of research and industrial experience in the US, Singapore and Nepal and has been awarded with various national and international S&T awards. She has published several research reports, articles, and has 3 US patents. She serves as an executive board member of various organizations related to innovation, leadership and entrepreneurship, as an STI expert. She is an executive member of Intellectual Property Protection Society Nepal (IPPSON).



Ms. Mohana Priya S.

Ms. Mohana Priya is from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India - a city built by entrepreneurship. She studied engineering in food technology, followed by an MBA in oil and gas, before going to Geneva to earn an executive master's from the Graduate Institute.

Upon coming back to India, Ms. Priya led sustainability for an energy company. As part of her work, she travelled pan-India and interacted with local communities, understanding the potential effects and risks of infrastructure, considering their cultural sensitivities. Animated with an entrepreneurial spirit, she started Kapala Helmets in October 2020 to create a fashion forward cycle helmet that is superiorly safe and extremely light - using carbon fiber.

Beyond commercializing helmets, Kapala Helmets also wants to make the urban cycle commute safe and pleasurable for Indian cyclists



Ms. Betty Zhao

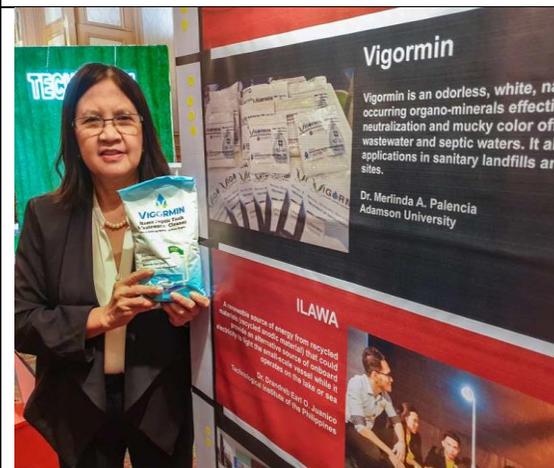
Ms. Betty Zhao is an innovator and co-founder of FengEn Tech Shanghai, Club Dreambuilder, and Ladies Who Tech, a social enterprise dedicated to promoting and achieving gender diversity in the STEM industry. Her professional experience runs across several industries, including TMT, renewable energy, and new materials.

Before having run several startups, she was a senior executive at Sky Solar Holdings (SKYS), where she was responsible for business development, strategy partners and also involved its 2014 IPO and subsequent investor relations effort. She has over a decade experience with international utility companies, being the first representative in China from EDF Trading Limited, a leading global energy market trading firm based in London. Under past management, EDF's carbon portfolio was recognized as one of top 3 worldwide traders in emission reduction products. Ms. Zhao holds a Masters degree in Marketing from the University of Melbourne.



Ms. Yendi Amalia

Ms. Yendi Amalia has over 18 years' experience in Communications. Since 2013, she serves as CEO at the Wordsmith Group, a language solutions company based in Jakarta, Indonesia. Her career has included being a senior copywriter and creative team in multinational advertising agencies (2002-2010), Communications Officer in private and public sector companies (2010), team leader in PR firms (2011-2012), and trainer and facilitator for non-governmental organizations. She received her Bachelor's degree in Journalism from Universitas Islam Bandung (2002) and completed her Postgraduate Program in Philosophy from Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Driyarkara, Jakarta. (2009)



Dr. Merlinda A. Palencia

Dr. Merlinda A. Palencia is currently a Full Professor in the Chemical Engineering Department at Adamson University in the Philippines. She is also the Chief Operating Officer of Envigor Natural Products Mfg. Inc., the first spin-off company of Adamson University's Technology Commercialization Program.

The primary focus of Dr. Palencia's scientific research is on environmental protection and water conservation. At present, Dr. Palencia is the project leader of two field-testing projects of Modular & Ecology-Friendly Domestic Wastewater Management in the Ati Community, Boracay Island, Malay Aklan, and in the Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) of selected Manila Bay Area.



Ms. Leena Pische Thomas

Ms. Leena Thomas is CEO of [Global Business Inroads](#) (GBI), based in India.

She has two decades of experience in the field of International Business, Technology and Project Management in the Climate Change Mitigation, Energy, Environment, Transport, Biotech and ICT sectors working with numerous leading US, European and Indian organizations.

Ms. Thomas established (GBI) in September 2009 to assist and serve Governments, NGOs, Financial Institutions, and Private Sector organizations with their technology, sustainable energy, environmental project development, market access and international business needs.



Ms. Lisa Fatimailetaelelemoemoea'ana Vaai

Ms. Lisa F. Vaai is a board director of I.H. Carruthers Ltd - a Samoan company established by her great-grand father in 1929. The business is still family-owned, with the current management team led by a fourth generation of the founding family. Eveni Carruthers is today one of the leading retailers of fabrics, uniforms, sporting goods and Pacific inspired apparel in the Pacific. The company continues to operate from its original headquarters on Beach Road, Apia.

Ms. Lisa leads the creative team at I.H. Carruthers Ltd in sourcing and developing textile designs inspired by traditional motifs from the Pacific for the company's apparel brands, several of which she has initiated and developed in an ongoing attempt to make the company more sustainable in a changing world.

As the driving force behind the company's international expansion, Lisa oversees export operations in Japan, the USA, and the Pacific. Its main apparel brand EveniPacific is sold in over 30 retail locations. She is an executive council member of the Samoa Manufacturers and Exporters Association.



Ms. Esther Bates

Ms. Esther Bates is Senior Project Management Officer, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) and GGGI's Project Manager for the Pacific Green Entrepreneurs Network, a regional program funded by the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD). The Network aims to support green and inclusive job growth by supporting entrepreneurs (particularly women and youth) develop their green and sustainable businesses whose business models include solutions aimed at contributing to their country's climate and sustainable development goals in six Pacific Island countries – Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Based in Suva, Fiji, she is originally from the UK via Australia, Malaysia and Singapore, she has lived and worked in Fiji for five out of the last eight years on various projects involving entrepreneurship and financial inclusion.

Esther has technical expertise in supporting entrepreneurs through access to finance and coaching support, in particular in the Pacific, South and Southeast Asia and Africa. Beyond this, her experience spans innovation, results measurement, social performance, economic development, project and commercial management in NGOs, private and international organizations.

Esther holds a Masters degree in Public Administration (International Development), in addition to her Commerce degree and Graduate Certificate of Management.



Ms. Anjali Aeri

Ms. Anjali Aeri, counsellor, PCT International Cooperation Division, Legal and International Affairs Department, Patents & Technology Sector, WIPO, is a national of Canada, and provides legal advice to patent applicants and industrial property Offices on the *Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT)* in her role as Counsellor, within the PCT International Cooperation Division, Office Services Section.

Notably, she designs and delivers Seminars and training Workshops on the PCT, vis-à-vis national patent Offices, intergovernmental organizations, and member States of WIPO, given her extensive experience in the provision of capacity building and technical assistance activities, particularly within Asia & the Pacific. Since 2010, she has remained the focal point for implementing PCT training activities for the benefit of ASEAN and SAARC member States.

Ms. Aeri holds an Honours Degree in Law from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, and a LL.M. in International Law from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland. She speaks both English and French.



Ms. Lolibeth R. Medrano

Ms. Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano is the Director, Bureau of Patents (BOP) in the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines. She is the winner of the prestigious 2020 Presidential Gawad Career Executive Service (CES) Award, the highest award given by the CES Board to recognize exemplary leaders in government.

A CES Officer IV and a lawyer by profession, Ms. Medrano has dedicated over 22 years in government service involving intellectual property (IP), environmental law, public policy and administration, organizational planning and project management, legislative work, international cooperation and trade negotiations.

She is most notable for spearheading efforts for IPOPHL to secure in 2017 the designation from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) as an International Searching Authority and International Preliminary Examining Authority (ISA/IPEA) and its operations starting May 2019.



Ms. Deepa Liyanage

Ms. Deepa Liyanage, the secretary to the State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation holds a BSc in Biology from university of Colombo. She also holds a post graduate diploma in Management from Rajarata University and a MA in Economics from University of Kalaniya, Sri Lanka. She is a special grade officer in Sri Lanka Administrative Services. She contributed her service in many higher governmental positions in Presidential Secretariat, Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs & Administrative Reforms, Ministry of Aviation, Ministry of Mahaweli Development & Environment, Ministry of Higher Education, Technology & Research.

She was also the focal point on Environmental Conservation Agenda and positioning Sri Lanka in the Global Environmental Initiatives.



Ms. Vindya Wijesinghe

Ms. Vindya Wijesinghe holds a BSc in Genetics from Bangalore University India and MSc. In Biotechnology from Post Graduate Institute of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. She serves as an Innovation Officer at National Innovation Agency Sri Lanka (Previously COSTI) and she is a member of the Technology Innovation Support Center at National Innovation Agency. She works in the capacity of IP management, technology transfer, and commercialization. She is also a member of the NIA team working as the Hub institute for the WIPO Enabling Innovation Environment (EIE) Project in Sri Lanka.