

A boost to diversity in companies

CaixaBank recognises the professional careers of Spanish female entrepreneurs, at a gathering with other worldwide leaders at its "Women in Business Awards 2020"

- **The awards, now in their fourth edition, reward the talent, business excellence and professional careers of female managers in Spain. The term for submitting candidacies is open until 7 October.**
- **The 11 regional winners will be part of the recently created "CaixaBank Women in Business Community" on LinkedIn, in which businesswomen can share ideas and knowledge with the winners of previous editions, and access the bank's exclusive experiences.**
- **The national winner will also be one of the Spanish representatives at the IWEC international awards, which will be held this year at a virtual ceremony in order to adapt to the new situation arising from COVID-19.**

Barcelona, 11 September 2020

CaixaBank, Spain's leading retail bank, is now welcoming the submission of candidacies for the fourth edition of the CaixaBank Women in Business Awards, that recognise the talent and the professional excellence of female entrepreneurs in Spain with standout careers, strategic vision, and transformative innovation and leadership skills; and they promote networking between worldwide business leaders.

The awards have been consolidated in recent years for the recognition they provide of workplace diversity and contribution to promoting gender equality in Spanish society.

The winner of the CaixaBank Women in Business Award is one of the two Spanish representatives at the 2020 IWEC Awards, within the framework of the International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWEC), a worldwide network of female business leaders who cooperate on a global level to create and distribute business wealth. The IWEC Awards will be delivered within the framework of IWEC Annual Conference which, in 2020, will be held for the first time at a virtual ceremony in order to adapt to the new situation arising from COVID-19.

In a new feature for the awards this year, all the winners are invited to be part of the new

“CaixaBank Women in Business Community” on LinkedIn, with gathers the winning entrepreneurs of all the editions of the “CaixaBank Women in Business Awards” and puts them in touch with other networks of businesswomen in Spain and internationally, such as IWECC, the International Women's Forum, Vital Voices and EJE&CON.

The “CaixaBank Women in Business Community” offers an extensive repository of information on female business and leadership, adapted to the interests of participants, and enables a participatory forum in which businesswomen can exchange knowledge and experience, learning from the best practices that have been adopted in each of the businesses represented. The platform also offers access to exclusive experiences driven by CaixaBank, as was the case of the virtual Disruptive Innovation session offered by the renowned chef, Ferran Adrià, in July.

Term open until 7 October

Candidacies for the “CaixaBank Women in Business Awards” can be submitted until 7 October. The candidates must fulfil the conditions established by IWECC, including being majority shareholders of their company and being actively involved in the daily operations of the business. Furthermore, the company must be at least three years old, have a minimum annual earnings equivalent to 1.5 million dollars and show a commitment to honesty, equity, objectivity and accountability.

In the regional phase, the jury of the awards, comprising managers from CaixaBank, will recognise one female manager for each of the bank's 11 regional management areas, and between them, the representative for the IWECC awards will be chosen, succeeding Inés Juste, chair of the Juste Group; Rocío Hervella, founder and CEO of Prosol; and Arancha Manzanares, deputy chair of Ayesa, former Spanish representatives for the international IWECC Awards, through CaixaBank.

CaixaBank has also taken its “Women in Business Awards” to its subsidiary BPI, with the aim of also championing diversity and gender equality in Portugal, recognising the careers of business leaders in the country. The winner is the Portuguese representative for the IWECC awards from BPI.

Since the creation of the IWECC awards, 411 women from 42 countries have been awarded, whose companies have a total turnover of 35.5 billion dollars and employ more than 348,200 people.

CaixaBank's Wengage programme, the institution's commitment to equality

Diversity, meritocracy, equal opportunities and talent recognition are some of the pillars of CaixaBank's corporate culture. Under these premises, it works with a commitment to be a pacesetter for its employees, promoting inclusion and participation and bolstering projects

that promote equality, both within the company and across the whole of society. In fact, 41.3% of management positions in CaixaBank are held by women, with a public commitment to increase this figure to 43% in 2021, and with a 40% proportion of women on its Board of Directors, one of the highest in the sector.

CaixaBank's Wengage diversity programme is a cross-disciplinary project developed by people from all areas of CaixaBank, based on meritocracy and the promotion of equal opportunities, which works to foster and visualise gender, functional and generational diversity. Wengage includes internal measures to foster flexibility and work-life balance, to raise awareness regarding diversity and strengthen the role of women, with training programmes and female mentoring plans, through which female managers will guide other professionals in developing their careers.

Wengage also develops external initiatives for customers and society, based on championing the diversity and equal opportunities in three fields of action: leadership and enterprise; innovation and education; and sport.

Furthermore, in January 2020, CaixaBank signed an Equality Plan to promote the principles of equal opportunities and diversity in work teams, increase the presence of women in management positions and strengthen measures to enhance the work-life balance. The plan features the scope of gender in managerial development programs and in recruitment and training processes, and the fostering of teleworking and flexibility.

Thanks to this commitment, CaixaBank has distinctions such as being included in the Bloomberg 2020 Gender-Equality Index, the Equality in Business Badge (DIE), managed by the Institute of Women, and has been recognised by the Másfamilia Foundation with the EFR Certification (Family Responsible Company). It has received various recognitions, such as the 25th anniversary of the FEDEPE Award (The Spanish Federation of Female Managers, Executives, Professionals and Entrepreneurs). It also features on the EWoB Gender Diversity Index.

CaixaBank is associated with the international programme Target Gender Equality and the Women's Empowerment Principles, of the United Nations; the Voluntary Agreement with the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, 'More women, better businesses', seeking better representativeness of women in management positions; and to the Diversity Charter, promoting equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory measures.

The IWEC Awards

The International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWEC) is a worldwide network of female business leaders who nurture company ownership and cooperate on a global level with the goal of creating and distributing wealth in the business world.

Every year, within the framework of its Annual Conference, IWECA hands out prestigious awards in recognition and support of businesswomen all over the world. Among other aspects, the IWECA awards aim to increase the awareness, credibility and responsibility of businesswomen, so that they can represent a major and decisive element in the development of the 21st century global economy.

The first edition of these awards took place in Barcelona in February 2007; subsequently, they were held in New York (2008), New Delhi (2009), Cape Town (2010), New York (2011), Barcelona (2012), Lima (2013), Stockholm (2014), Istanbul (2015), Brussels (2016), Seattle (2017), Shanghai (2018), and New Delhi (2019).