

Commitment to diversity and business excellence***CaixaBank opens the call for the seventh edition of its "Women in Business Awards", which acknowledge the careers of leading women executives in Spain***

- ***Participants have between 28 April and 28 May to submit their candidacies.***
- ***The awards have been established in Spain in recent years. In 2022, the bank received more than 100 candidacies, three times the average received in previous years.***
- ***From among the 14 women awarded in the first regional stage, CaixaBank will choose the national winner who will also be one of the businesswomen awarded at the international IWEA Awards, which will be held in Turin (Italy) this year.***

28 April 2023

CaixaBank is seeking out 14 top businesswomen in Spain in a new edition of the "CaixaBank Women in Business Awards", which each year recognise the talent and professional excellence of leading female entrepreneurs with standout careers, strategic vision, and transformative innovation and leadership skills.

The "CaixaBank Women in Business Awards", which are now in their seventh year, have been established in recent years for their recognition of business excellence and contribution to promoting gender equality in Spanish society. In 2022, the bank received over 100 candidates, three times the average received in previous years. Also, this year CaixaBank opened the call to female business owners of microenterprises and SMEs that meet the award criteria.

From among the entries received in the initial regional stage, the judging panel—made up of a group of male and female executives from CaixaBank—will select 14 regional winners, one for each of the bank's Business Commercial Divisions. All these winners will be invited to join the CaixaBank Women in Business Awards Community on LinkedIn, created by the bank to promote relationships and networking among all the winners of previous years, and giving them access to exclusive activities.

In the subsequent national stage, the national winner will be chosen from the 14 regional

winners. She will join previous national winners of the "CaixaBank Women in Business Awards", including Inés Juste, president of the Juste Group; Rocío Hervella, founder and CEO of Prosol; Arancha Manzanares, Vice-President of Ayesa; Lina Mascaró, president of the Mascaró Group; Pilar Martínez-Cosentino, vice-president of the Cosentino Group; and Maite Casademunt, president and creative director of Lola Casademunt.

The national winner of the "CaixaBank Women in Business Awards" will also be one of the Spanish businesswomen awarded at the IWECA Awards of the International Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWECA), the worldwide network of leading female business owners who cooperate on a global level. These awards, first created in 2007, are presented at the annual IWECA meeting, which will take place this year between 5 and 7 November 2023 in Turin (Italy).

Submissions open until 28 May

Female entrepreneurs who are interested in participating can access the entry criteria of this year's call and submit their candidacies at www.caixabank.es/PremioMujerEmpresaria between 28 April and 28 May.

In accordance with the entry criteria, candidates must meet the conditions established by the IWECA, including being a majority shareholder in the company, being actively involved in the day-to-day running of the business, and showing a commitment to honesty, fairness, objectivity and responsibility. In addition, the company must have been in business for at least three years, have a minimum turnover equivalent to USD 1.5 million, and be actively engaged in importing or exporting goods or services, or be prepared to start global business.

Additional criteria will be applied to assess the merits of the candidates in relation to the success of their business activity and career, such as the strength and degree of development and consolidation of the company's goods and services, and the degree of innovation, job creation, financial soundness and ESG aspects of the business. The jury will also be looking at the candidate's business excellence, leadership skills and participation in women's mentoring initiatives and networks of other female business owners or business leadership groups.

Meanwhile, BPI, CaixaBank's subsidiary in Portugal, will be holding the "Premios Mulher Empresária BPI" awards, which this year are in their sixth edition. The winners, all women leaders in the Portuguese business world, will be the Portuguese representatives at the IWECA Awards.

The CaixaBank Women in Business Community and the Women's Leadership forum

All the winners of the "CaixaBank Women in Business Awards" are invited to participate in the "CaixaBank Women in Business Community", a private virtual LinkedIn community created in 2020, that has been set up as a platform to share knowledge, ideas and

experiences, and a meeting point to establish professional connections between the group of award-winning female executives.

The Community also offers access to exclusive experiences, such as forums, debates, conferences and domestic and international events, with which it aims to contribute to the development and leadership of women in the business world.

Last year, as part of the awards ceremony for the sixth edition of the "CaixaBank Women in Business Awards", the "Women's Leadership" forum was held in Madrid, the first in-person gathering of the Community. The forum brought together over 40 female business owners and was attended by the CaixaBank CEO Gonzalo Gortázar and many of the bank's executives.

The IWECA Awards

The International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWECA), headquartered in New York, is a worldwide network of female business leaders, who nurture company ownership and cooperate on a global level through chambers of commerce and business organisations with the aim of networking and developing female leadership.

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

In the fifteen years that the awards have been running, IWECA has celebrated 501 businesswomen from 48 countries. The companies led by these businesswomen have a combined workforce of over 338,000 people and an annual turnover of USD 44.3 billion.

CaixaBank's commitment to diversity and business excellence

The "CaixaBank Women in Business Awards" fall within the Wengage diversity programme, a CaixaBank-wide project developed by people from all areas of the bank based on meritocracy and promoting equal opportunities. The programme strives to encourage and implement diversity in all its dimensions: gender, functional, generational, LGBTI or cultural.

Wengage includes internal measures to foster flexibility and work-life balance, raise awareness regarding diversity, and strengthen the role of women in the bank. Wengage also includes external initiatives for customers and society, focused on promoting diversity and equal opportunities along our four lines of action: leadership and entrepreneurship, innovation and education, sport, and rural settings.

A total of 42.4% of managerial positions at CaixaBank are held by women, with 40% of seats

on its Board of Directors occupied by women, some of the highest ratios in the sector. Thanks to this commitment, CaixaBank is among the top three companies in the world on the Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index 2023.

The project is also promoted by the CaixaBank Business division. The bank has consolidated its stance as a leading bank for businesses thanks to its specialisation model, with products and services tailored to the specific needs of this customer segment. CaixaBank Business provides its services through 220 specialised centres and branches throughout every region of Spain, staffed by 2,400 highly qualified professionals with a solid reputation in business consulting. The company has specialists in financing, foreign trade, treasury, tourism, real estate and SMEs, who offer a personalised service beyond financing to support and promote the corporate sector.

Internationally, CaixaBank supports its corporate customers with various operational solutions that provide effective access to 127 markets in different countries, and it offers the best guidance for their operations abroad.