



# Newsletter 2014/4

## Message from the President



Women in Aerospace Europe is celebrating its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was co-founded by Claudia Kessler, currently CEO of HE Space and Chair of the WIA-Europe Board, and myself, back in June 2009.

The association has been evolving rapidly also due to the dissemination strategy we have implemented, trying to be more present at local level with the creation of more and more local groups in key locations. Please, join us in Rome, Paris, Brussels,

Leiden, Cologne, Munich, Bremen already and specifically in Toulouse on 6<sup>th</sup> November for our launch event (you will find more information in this Newsletter). Very soon two more local groups (Geneva and Madrid) will be inaugurated.

Our mandate is to provide the right platform for women in the aerospace sector to growth, to know each other, to empower. The goal is to have a more balanced representation of men and women in the aerospace sector in Europe. We spent, thanks to the efforts of all our individual and corporate members, the last years to grow as an association to become more and more the place to be for women in Europe who want to develop professionally in the aerospace sector, and as individuals. Our membership today comprises 15 corporate and 309 individual members and is continuing to grow rapidly.

And now some words about our recent activities: On 8<sup>th</sup> September our General Assembly meeting took place at the ESA/ESTEC premises. Four Board members were re-confirmed and Jennifer Newlands was elected Director of Communications. Following decisions at the Strategy Retreat in Italy this year, Elena Feichtinger was announced as first WIA-Europe Executive Director. You will find more information about the composition of our Board and the “newcomers” inside.

During the 65<sup>th</sup> International Astronautical Congress (IAC) in Toronto (29 September - 3 October) WIA-Europe was prominently present. For the first time an international strategy meeting between WIA-Europe, WIA-Canada and WIA was held indicating promising perspectives for future closer cooperation already starting with a mutual distribution of Newsletters and Annual Reports. We all enjoyed the company of more than 120 participants including 3 Heads of Space Agencies as well as the IAF President



and a brilliant keynote speech of Sandy Magnus, former NASA astronaut and Executive Director of AIAA during our first international Women in Aerospace breakfast. Please be invited to read about this and more events at IAC inside this newsletter. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those contributing to the preparation of these most successful events, specifically Andrea Boese, Claudia Kessler, Lesley Jane Smith and Elena Feichtinger.

I am extremely glad to inform you that our Director of International Relations, Andrea Boese, was re-elected IAF Vice-President and our Director of Legal Affairs, Lesley Jane Smith, was approved as IAF General Counsel. Sincere congratulations to both of them!

One of the highlights of this Newsletter is an interview with one of our most prominent individual members, Samantha Cristoforetti, ESA astronaut from Italy who will be the first Italian female astronaut to fly to space on a 6-month mission to the International Space Station in December this year.

Women in Aerospace Europe is positioning itself as the natural environment to build up relations and therefore, to increase awareness. Often I get the question from new potential members: why should I become a member of WIA-Europe? What am I getting out of it? There is a simple answer to this question: WIA-Europe is the platform for high level connections to the aerospace world, in Europe and worldwide. The professional advantage to be part of it is clear, with no need of further explanation. What is not evident is the enormous potential of the contribution of each and every one of us in and to the association to develop not only a better professional environment, but mainly a better society.

Enjoy reading the Newsletter!

October 2014  
**Simonetta di Pippo**, President of WIA-Europe



Interview with Samantha Cristoforetti



Born in Milan, Italy, on 26 April 1977, Samantha Cristoforetti, a Captain in the Italian Air Force and member of the astronauts corps of the European Space Agency (ESA) since 2009, is currently training in Star City near Moscow, Russia, for the second long duration mission (mission name “Futura”) of the Italian Space Agency (ASI) on board the International Space Station. She will fly on a Soyuz launcher from Baikonur (Kazakhstan) to the International Space Station and will be a Flight Engineer for Expedition 42 and 43 between December 2014 and May 2015. Samantha will be writing a new chapter of the exciting history of female astronautics, being the first ever Italian female astronaut to fly in space.

Find [here](#) Samantha’s Biography.

Samantha Cristoforetti has joined WIA-Europe in 2010 and is an outstanding example for advancing WIA-Europe’s vision of “A European aerospace sector with a balanced representation of women on all levels” in the elite profession of astronaut. Despite her extremely busy training schedule, Samantha was ready for a short interview with WIA-Europe:

Samantha, as first Italian and second ESA female astronaut in space you are following the path that was opened by Valentina Tereshkova more than 51 years ago. When did you decide to focus your career path on rather male dominated professional domains like fighter pilots or astronauts? Was this a dream of your childhood and how did this become reality?

***“Yes, I decided very early on, already as a child, that I wanted to become an astronaut. I was fascinated by the stars, by science fiction and of course by actual astronauts flying to space. As I grew up I became more and more interested in science and technology and so I eventually earned a degree***



*in engineering. But I also had a passion for flying, so when the opportunity arose I joined the Air Force and was trained as a combat pilot. I was at the beginning of my operational career when ESA started the selection process for a new class of astronauts. And here I am.”*

WIA-Europe is passionate about expanding women’s opportunities for leadership and increasing their visibility in the aerospace sector. How important are organisations such as WIA-Europe to support and promote stronger involvement of women in this field and what would be your advice to our organisation for becoming even more successful in fulfilling our mission?

*“First of all, a disclaimer: as an astronaut, I have a very visible job in the aerospace industry, but it’s not one that I would call a position of leadership, nor one that provides me with much insight into the challenges faced by women who do seek positions of leadership. So, I don’t feel particularly qualified to answer your question. If you’re nevertheless interested in my advice, I would probably recommend a continued focus on networking and an increased push to support practices across the industry that favour work-life balance and do not penalize parenthood.”*

During our recent WIA-Europe breakfast event at the International Astronautical Congress (IAC) in Toronto our keynote speaker Sandy Magnus, former NASA astronaut and Executive Director of The American Institute for Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), said: “Just follow your passion, because you never know what’s going to happen! In your life there are a lot of things that are out of your control, but as long as you are continuing to stay passionately engaged with what you do, you are going to be fine.” What is your passion in life and how did your passion help you to “reach the stars”?

*“I was very lucky to find my passion very early in life. Already as a child I dreamt of becoming an astronaut and travelling to space and that dream has accompanied me throughout my life. Even if I had not succeeded in becoming an astronaut, that passion would have made me a better human being, because it was a constant push, as I went through life, to always give my absolute best. Finding a strong passion, whatever it is, is the best gift a child or young person can receive. It gives you the motivation to embrace challenges, and challenges in turn build your strength and your confidence.”*

#### History of female astronauts achievements

1963	Valentina Tereshkova (USSR), first woman in space
1982	Svetlana Savitskaya (USSR), second woman in space
1983	Sally Ride, first American woman and third woman in space
1984	Svetlana Savitskaya (USSR), first woman to walk in space and first woman to go to space twice
1984	Kathryn Sullivan, first American woman to walk in space
1986	Christa McAuliffe (US) chosen to be first teacher in space, died in the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster
1991	Helen Sharman (GB), first British astronaut and first European woman in space
1992	Roberta Bondar, first Canadian woman in space
1994	Chiaki Mukai, first Japanese woman in space
1995	Eileen Collins (US), first female pilot of a Space Shuttle
1996	Shannon Lucid (US), first American woman to stay on Mir space station, sets endurance record for women and US space endurance record
1999	Eileen Collins (US), first female Space Shuttle Commander
2001	Susan Helms (US), first female member of an ISS Expedition, sets world record for single longest spacewalk, 8 hours, 56 minutes
2001	Claudie Haigneré, first French woman in space, first European woman to visit the ISS
2006	Anousheh Ansari, first Iranian-born woman in space
2007	Sunita Williams (US), sets record for longest spaceflight by a woman, 195 days
2007	Peggy Whitson, first female ISS Expedition commander
2012	Liu Yang, first Chinese woman in space
2012	Sunita Williams (US), sets record cumulative spacewalk time by a female astronaut



Sincere thanks, Samantha, for this short interview. WIA-Europe wishes you success and the best of luck for your remaining training period and – most importantly – for the exciting endeavour ahead. We all will be following your flight with profound interest and our minds and hearts will be with you!



Stay connected with Samantha Cristoforetti through: <http://samanthacristoforetti.esa.int/>

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## WIA-Europe “Newcomers”

### New Executive Director of WIA-Europe: Elena Feichtinger



The WIA-Europe Board of Directors meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> September in Noordwijk appointed Elena Feichtinger the organization’s first Executive Director. Elena Feichtinger was born in Moscow and received a Master’s degree in Electronics from the Moscow Energy Institute in 1986. Her first professional involvement in space projects started with supporting the operations of the ESA mission EUROMIR-95 (6-month “MIR” mission of Thomas Reiter) at the Russian Mission Control Center near Moscow. In 2004 she finished her second Master’s degree in Psychology from the Moscow State University M.V.Lomonosov. Again “space” was a focus of her attention when she prepared her theses on the “Psychological Preparation of International Cosmonauts Crews Using State-of-the-art Psychological Training Technologies”. Since 2006 she has been working as a consultant and later as a contractor for the European Space Agency (ESA) on ESA’s life science research cooperation with Russia. She was the ESA project psychologist and Project Manager for the Mars500 project where she was closely cooperating with Russian and Chinese project partners. Since the beginning of 2014 she has been working as a volunteer in the Secretariat of the International Astronautical Federation in Paris. Since 2013 she has been a member of WIA-Europe and has been working on developing interest in WIA-Europe in Russia.

In her function as WIA-Europe Executive Director she provides overall management services, closely cooperates with the President, Chair of the Board and the Board of Directors and she is the official point of contact for management activities related to individual and corporate membership.

**New Director of Communications of WIA-Europe: Jennifer Newlands**



At the General Assembly on 8<sup>th</sup> September in Noordwijk, Jennifer Newlands was elected new Director of Communications. Jennifer Newlands is a British National based in Toulouse. She recently became Head of Product Communication at Airbus and was previously Head of Corporate Social Responsibility at Airbus Defence & Space. A communications professional with more than 20 years' experience, Jennifer has worked more than 15 years in the aerospace sector in a variety of organisations. She was the main leader in the recent creation of the WIA-Europe local group in Toulouse which will be officially launched on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

**WIA-Europe Board of Directors**

**Re-election of members of the WIA-Europe Board of Directors**

During its General Assembly meeting WIA-Europe approved the re-election of **Anna Schubert** as Secretary, **Diana Pueyo** as Director of Training and Regional Development, **Lesley-Jane Smith** as Director of Legal Affairs and **Maria Cristina Falvella** as Director of Mentoring, Awards and Grants.

This makes that the composition of the board will be as follows:



**Simonetta di Pippo**  
President



**Claudia Kessler**  
Chair



**Anna Schubert**  
Secretary



**Luisella Giulicchi**  
Treasurer



**Maria C. Falvella**  
Mentoring



**Lesley-Jane Smith**  
Legal Affairs



**Paola Belingheri**  
Membership



**Diana Pueyo**  
Regional Development  
& Training



**Andrea Boese**  
International  
Relations



**Jennifer Newlands**  
Communications



**Fiorella Coliolo**  
Corporate  
membership

## WIA-Europe at IAC, Toronto

On 1st of October our traditional breakfast was held. More than 120 women representing the professional space community - and a handful brave males - attended the Women in Aerospace (WIA) breakfast co-organised by WIA-Europe and WIA-Canada and moderated by Andrea Boese, WIA-Europe Director of International Relations and IAF Vice-President. Also WIA and WIA-South Africa executives and representatives were present, as well as 3 Heads of Space Agencies.



The growing status of this traditional WIA-Europe breakfast event at IAC was reflected by the attendance of IAF President Mr Kiyoshi Higuchi who welcomed everyone present and, in a reference to the Congress theme 'Our World Needs Space', quipped that "space also needs women" - to much amusement and applause. [Read more...](#)



Plenary 7, was proposed and organised by WIA-Europe, addressed a strategically important issue and looked at how effective the international space community is engaging with stakeholders. "Global societal challenges as the key driver for space activities: the imperative for a new way to engage stakeholders" was the title of this plenary.



An IAF Global Networking Forum panel discussion on “Diversity in the Space Domain” was jointly organised by WIA-Europe, WIA-Canada and WIA and had the goal of exploring the role of diversity in space related workplaces. A special focus was put on the role of women in the evolution of the space domain in order to ensure the optimal performance of women professionals, and to develop best practices that facilitate the enhanced and ultimately balanced representation of women in strategic positions of management and leadership. [Read more...](#)



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Please enjoy [here](#) WIA-Europe’s first video clip summarizing all 3 IAC WIA-Europe events.

## **WIA-Europe at the Welcome Cocktail of the European Interparliamentary Space Conference (EISC) in Paris**

As of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014, and in accordance with the yearly rolling Presidency, the French Parliamentary Space Committee has the honour of presiding over the 16<sup>th</sup> EISC session.

The theme chosen for this year's Presidency is 'Space and Growth' and it will take place in Paris from 20<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> October.

At this occasion, WIA-Europe through its Paris Local Group jointly with the GPE (GPE, Groupe des Parlementaires pour l'Espace) organised the welcome cocktail on 19<sup>th</sup> October at Maison de l'Europe in Paris.



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## **WIA-Europe/International Aviation Womens Association (IAWA) Networking Event**

WIA-Europe through our Brussels Local Group and IAWA are delighted to invite members and friends to the first WIA-Europe/IAWA joint networking event which will take place in Brussels on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

WIA and IAWA share the common goal of expanding women's opportunities for career advancement and leadership in the aerospace and aviation sectors, through the establishment of a broad network of professional contacts. This event marks the beginning of our collaboration and we invite you to be a part

of it. You will learn more about WIA and IAWA and have a unique opportunity to meet and connect with active members of our industry. [Read more...](#)

Location:

[Muséum des Sciences Naturelles](#)

Rue Vautier, 29

1000 Bruxelles

Belgium



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## Launch of Local Group Toulouse

Our 8th local group will be launched in Toulouse. This will happen on November 6. If you are interested in attending this launch event, you are welcome to join us from 6PM.

Draft Programme:

- WIA-Europe presentation
- Official launch of WIA-Europe Local Group Toulouse
- Cocktail reception



Location:

[Cité de l'Espace](#)

Avenue Jean Gonord - B.P. 25855

31506 Toulouse - Cedex 5

France

## WIA-Europe grants

WIA-Europe would like to encourage and support upcoming talent – young professionals and students alike – and for this we have set up a grants programme.

The programme provides grants of € 500 to cover attendance at aerospace workshops and conferences and is intended to support new and young colleagues with their first experiences in presenting a paper in an international context.

Are you interested in applying for a grant to attend an aerospace conference or workshop in 2015? The deadline for submissions for the first half of the year is **31<sup>st</sup> January 2015**.

Click [here](#) to find more information on the application procedure.

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## Have you renewed your WIA-Europe membership for 2014?

If you haven't done so yet, please renew your membership by paying the annual membership fee. You can do so by following the [link for Paypal](#) or by making a bank transfer to: WIA-Europe, Rabobank NL, Katwijk, The Netherlands. IBAN: NL33RABO0150292716. Please quote your full name with every payment. Remember that a corporate discount on the individual membership fee is valid only for employees of our gold and platinum [corporate members](#). If you have any questions regarding your membership renewal, please contact [membership@wia-europe.org](mailto:membership@wia-europe.org)

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## Past Events

### *Bremen:*

- 27 August: Networking Dinner

### *Brussels:*

- 11 September: Informal get together with a presentation of former Belgian Senator Dominique Tilmans

### *Cologne:*

- 25 September: Visit to the ESA European Astronaut Center (EAC) & networking drinks

### *Leiden:*

- 8 September: WIA Europe General Assembly, Noordwijk
- 1 October: Women in Space at woensdagmorgen event BIC, Noordwijk

### *Munich:*

- 12 October: Guided visit to the Munich Airport

### *Paris:*

- 19 October: WIA Europe at the welcome cocktail of the European Interparliamentary Space Conference

### *Rome:*

- 26 September: Negotiation Skills training organized in cooperation with LUISS Business School's Aviation MBA

## Upcoming Events

### *Bremen:*

- 13 November: Guided tour at ZARM
- 26 November: Christmas dinner

### *Brussels:*

- 6 November: WIA-Europe/IAWA Networking event

### *Cologne\*:*

\*E-mail address will be communicated asap

- More events coming soon...

### *Leiden:*

- 20 November: Aerospace women's day at TU Delft

### *Munich:*

- More events coming soon...

### *Paris:*

- More events coming soon...

### *Rome:*

- 30 October: Guided tour of the exhibition: "My planet from Space: Fragility and beauty" in the Palazzo delle Esposizioni museum. This tour will be followed by a networking aperitif

*If you want more information about one of the events above, please send an e-mail to the relevant local group, by clicking on the name of the local group*

WIA-Europe members are also active in Kourou and Geneva, so don't hesitate to contact [RegionalDevelopment@wia-europe.org](mailto:RegionalDevelopment@wia-europe.org) if you are interested in joining them.



# WOMEN IN AEROSPACE EUROPE



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