

## “NEW SPACE ECONOMY AND GENDER DIVERSITY: CLOSING THE GAP”

WIA-E member Isabella Palatii about News Space Economy dynamics and Diversity. Interview with cyber expert at Spacewatch.global Tiziana Casinelli on female role models, on how to eliminate gender bias in space industry, and on opportunities for gender diversity in the context of the NSE.

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, the New Space Economy (NSE) ExpoForum started in Rome, for 3 days intensive kermesse of over 2700 attendees, 140 exhibitors, 184 speakers among the most influential world experts in the space sector, 60 vertical sessions on data analytics, future markets, new mobility, new finances and services, and 11 side events, including a special focus on women contribution with the WIA-Europe panel on “Women in the New Space” and the Thales Alenia Space Poster on “The role of women in New Space Economy environment as game changers and innovators”.

The forum aimed to convey the key message that the New Space Economy acts as a growth engine within the global economy, and Europe intends to be one of the most prominent players. During the panels, the best practices for the development potential of the space ecosystem have been illustrated, as well as the tools and approaches designed to promote and guarantee innovation and competitiveness on the global markets.

A light has been shed on how the space sector is not anymore just science and research but acts as a value generator. Under this new perspective and understanding of space, it becomes imperative to collaborate, on all levels, across and within different sectors and realities. In the context of the New Space Economy, it has been possible to observe how the space industry is not anymore a singularity, but it has been contaminated and improved by different sectors (e.g. IT): this results in a diversity approach that is driving the space ecosystem away from the traditional model, not only on a technological level, but also in teamwork dynamics and business models.

Within this framework, the New Space Economy’s major driver is innovation, which is not achievable if the environment turns out to be a static one.

Diversity proves to be a key element for the promotion of innovation and a competitive environment, especially when considering that the space sector tackles daily some of the most important and challenging problems on Earth, which require new, gravity-defying means of working.

As we need multiple sectors to come together to deliver the best services, same applies for gender: we need diversity of thought to achieve success. While correlation does not equal causation, multiple studies have proved that the correlation does indicate that when companies commit themselves to diverse leadership, they are more successful.

Diversity in gender becomes a strength, on the grounds that women bring a complementary vision to men. Women become driver of innovation by positively mediating the decision-making process, by making a habit of asking for feedback and by creating superior team dynamics: all this result in improved productivity, creativity and problem-solving skills. By expanding the collective variety of skills, knowledge and ideas, diversity becomes a precious economic asset for a business economic development. We have asked some questions on the subject to Tiziana Casinelli, who works in the space industry since 1997 and is currently serving as a space security and cyber expert at Spacewatch.global, and who was also among the speakers in the New Space Economy ExpoForum:

**Do you think that women could be really considered an added-value to the business if they keep their full personality and promote female role model?**

Promoting new female role models is essential both for inspiring future professionals and for overcoming the current biased business world. Nowadays

only few women have really made their way upstream, and they are too limited in number to be considered reference role models for new generations. There is a need to increase their number and create a sufficient set of female role models.

**How important becomes diversity as an economic asset within the framework of the New Space Economy?**

Diversity is fundamental. There are numbers to demonstrate this, and those numbers are undebatable. E.g. 57% of the companies that have established diversity policies have seen their customer satisfaction increase, furthermore it has been proved that companies with a more diverse management team have an EBIT (operational earning) 48% higher than other companies who do not.

**How could we eliminate gender bias in space industry?**

Imposing quotas at each level of employment. This could be seen as an unfair methodology, but it is clearly a mandatory phase if we want to eliminate gender bias. Once the equilibrium is met, these rules could be reconsidered.

**How can we create opportunities for gender diversity in the context of the NSE?**

Developing strong networking among women, who need to learn to support each other regardless the fact whether they are great friends or not.

The message given by the forum and multiple research is clear: diversity mean business, and business is now an integral part of the New Space Economy movement. And in today’s constantly changing and competitive landscape, having diverse workforce has never been more critical.



If you want to learn more about Women In Aerospace Europe, please do not hesitate to contact us at

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Please fill in our registration form or visit:

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