

WEgate 2020 – We open doors for women entrepreneurs

Open call for membership in WEgate Thematic Group (TG) -

‘ACCESS TO FINANCE FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS’

Respected,

WEgate Consortium, led by the European Small Business Alliance (ESBA) and comprising Foundation for Management and Industrial Research, Business Angels Europe and GYB International, responsible for the implementation of the project “WEgate 2020 - We open doors for Women Entrepreneurs” (WEgate) publishes the Open call for individual applications for membership in the WEgate Thematic Group on ‘**Access to finance for women entrepreneurs**’.

WEgate project, co-funded by the COSME programme of the European Union, represents one of the key initiatives of the European Commission for supporting women entrepreneurship (WE), aiming to become a one-stop-shop where existing and potential women entrepreneurs can find assistance, inspiration, motivation and get in touch with peers and stakeholders for facilitating their growth and competitiveness. It features an online platform www.wegate.eu that offers information and networking opportunities; commissions pan-European annual survey on the needs of women entrepreneurs, [WEbarometer](#); organizes numerous events, webinars, b2b sessions as well as the WEgate training academy for building the skills within the WE support eco-system.

One of the aims of the WEgate project is to increase visibility of the women entrepreneurs and promote discussion on important topics for improving the conditions for WE development. To achieve this, the WEgate consortium is promoting the creation of a large European WE community of practice that focuses on engaging a growing and diverse number of stakeholders supporting women entrepreneurs with an emphasis on co-creation and networking.

The WEgate Thematic Group (TG) on ‘Access to finance for women entrepreneurs’ represents an ad-hoc group to be formed within the WEgate Community, aiming to address one of the key areas of interest for advancing WE in Europe – access to finance for improved support of women entrepreneurs.

Full details on the area of intervention of the thematic group and possibility for participation are presented in the attached Terms of Reference.

Yours sincerely,



Gabriela Kostovska Bogoeska

Executive director, Foundation for Management and Industrial Research
WEgate Community council coordinator



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WEgate Thematic Group – Access to finance for women entrepreneurs

Terms of Reference

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I. Background

The WEgate community is the European women entrepreneurship community of practice, that focuses on engaging a growing and diverse number of stakeholders supporting women entrepreneurs across Europe. The Community aims to mobilize the women entrepreneurship (WE) eco-system in order to jointly represent better the interest of aspiring and existing women entrepreneurs, becoming a recognized social partner to the European Commission in the WE-related public policy processes.

The main objective of the WEgate community is to enhance women entrepreneurship by facilitating networking, sharing good practices between actors, intermediary stakeholders, in order to improve the support effectively delivered to women entrepreneurs and to motivate more women to start their business or to support the development of their business across Europe.

To achieve these, the community building activities will rely on a three-layered approach:

1. The *wider community* - remaining open for all stakeholders interested in joining and contributing to the community, participating in the events or benefiting from the communication activities. Already registered users of the WEgate e-platform are automatically becoming an integral part of the wider community.
2. In order to increase impact and bring more dynamic role to the community, a *Community Council* consisted of selected WE stakeholders will be established as a main steering body of the Community; and
3. For addressing key priority areas in the field of women entrepreneurs and facilitating exchange of knowledge and practices, dedicated *thematic groups* will be set-up within the Community.

II. The role of the WEgate thematic groups

For addressing burning challenges in the field of WE, **3 (three) dedicated thematic groups** will be set within the community that will work on developing recommendations for improving the conditions in selected areas like, policies and programmes for women entrepreneurship, access to finance for women entrepreneurs, and other aspects.

The results of the TG work will be promoted and disseminated in line with the WEgate advocacy and representation plan as well as accompanied by dedicated campaigning activities that will involve different channels. The recommendations for improvement will be introduced into a



policy brief, to be widely distributed to the relevant stakeholders from the WE eco-system as well as presented at the WEgate annual summits.

III. Main objectives of the WEgate Thematic Group – ‘Access to finance for women entrepreneurs’

The WEgate TG on *Access to finance for women entrepreneurs* represents an expert group with an advisory role for the matters in its area of intervention. The activities of the thematic group are expected to contribute to the definition of concrete recommendations for improving the access to finance for women entrepreneurs. The group will work on reviewing the state-of-play in the addressed fields and provide opinion and recommendations on the actions needed for improving the access to finance for women entrepreneurs.

IV. Membership

The thematic group will involve limited number of members, not exceeding 10 members, representatives from the eco-system for economic empowerment and SME development with specific focus on women entrepreneurship support and development.

V. Approach used for the creation of the TG

Guiding working principles of the TG:

- Open for discussion and collaboration;
- Focused on practical and hands-on solutions;
- Complementarity and inspiration – supporting and motivating further the wider WEgate community;
- Relevance – producing results that are relevant in a wider context.

Personal characteristics of the TG members:

- Insightfulness – having practical knowledge and/or experience in the addressed field;
- Dedication – willingness to dedicate time and energy to the TG operation;
- WE activism – previous experience in access to finance, public policy or advocating for WE will be an asset.

VI. Expectations of TG Members

- 7-10 committed individuals should be part of the TG
- 2 online meetings are required in the period from December 2021 – January 2022 (usually via ZOOM)
- Regular e-mail communication
- The work of the TG will be co-facilitated by the WEgate team members
- TG might choose lead or co-leads for different activities, if needed
- Recommendations will be summarised into a dedicated policy brief



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VII. Application for membership

For membership in the TG, the interested candidates should submit their professional biographies to the following email address: wagate2020@mir.org.mk, no later than **29th of November 2021**.

Each candidate will be informed on the status of their application within 3 (three) working days after the closing of the open call.

