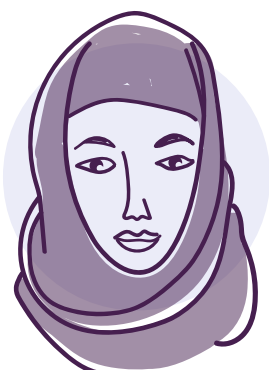
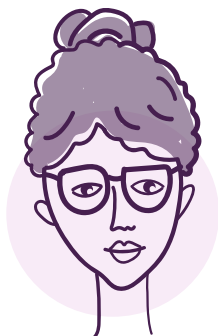
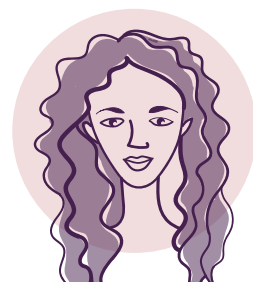
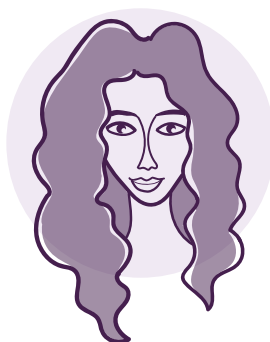
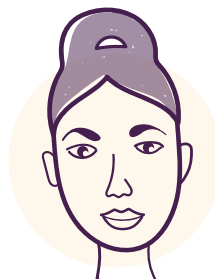


The Reykjavík Manual

Women leaders offer practical
solutions for a better future

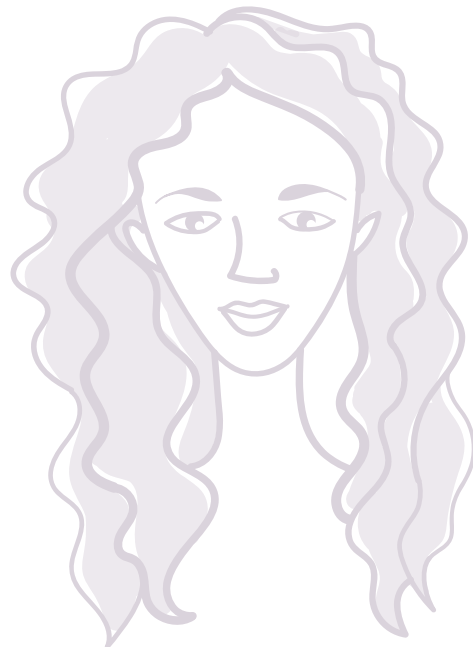
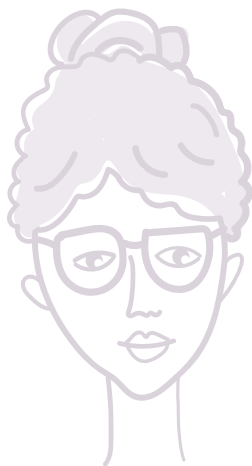


Designed for all leaders

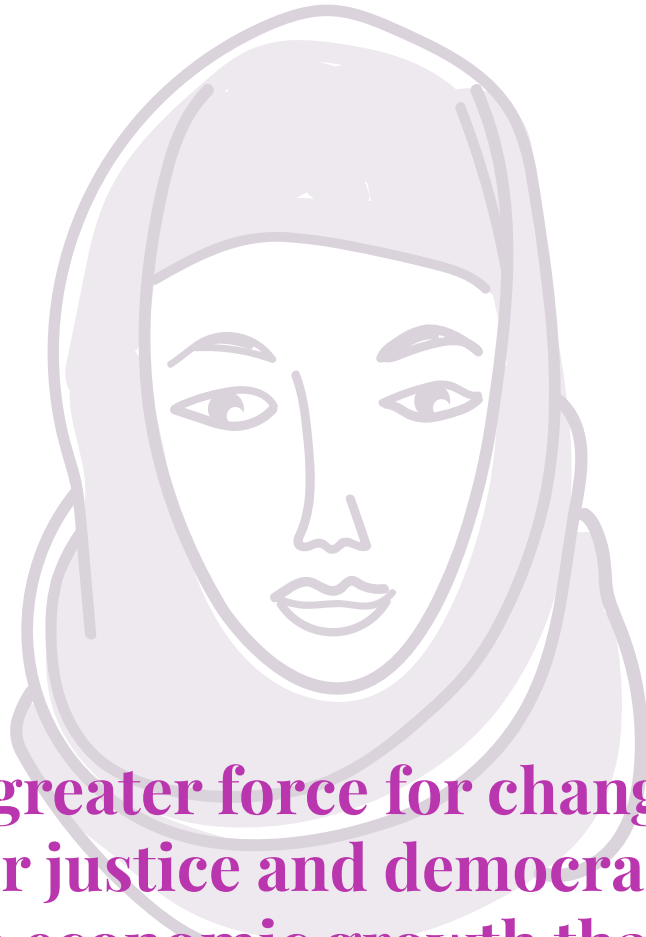
The world's most pressing problems are too great to confront alone. At the 2020 Reykjavík Global Forum, more than 900 women met to ask: How do we build back better as a global society? And how can we approach ambitious goals with practical, achievable steps?

The Reykjavík Manual presents those answers with a set of concrete actions you can use as leaders to build a more equitable society, using the framework of the UN [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

You have the influence—and importantly, the power—to make positive change.



**This is our invitation to build
back better together.**

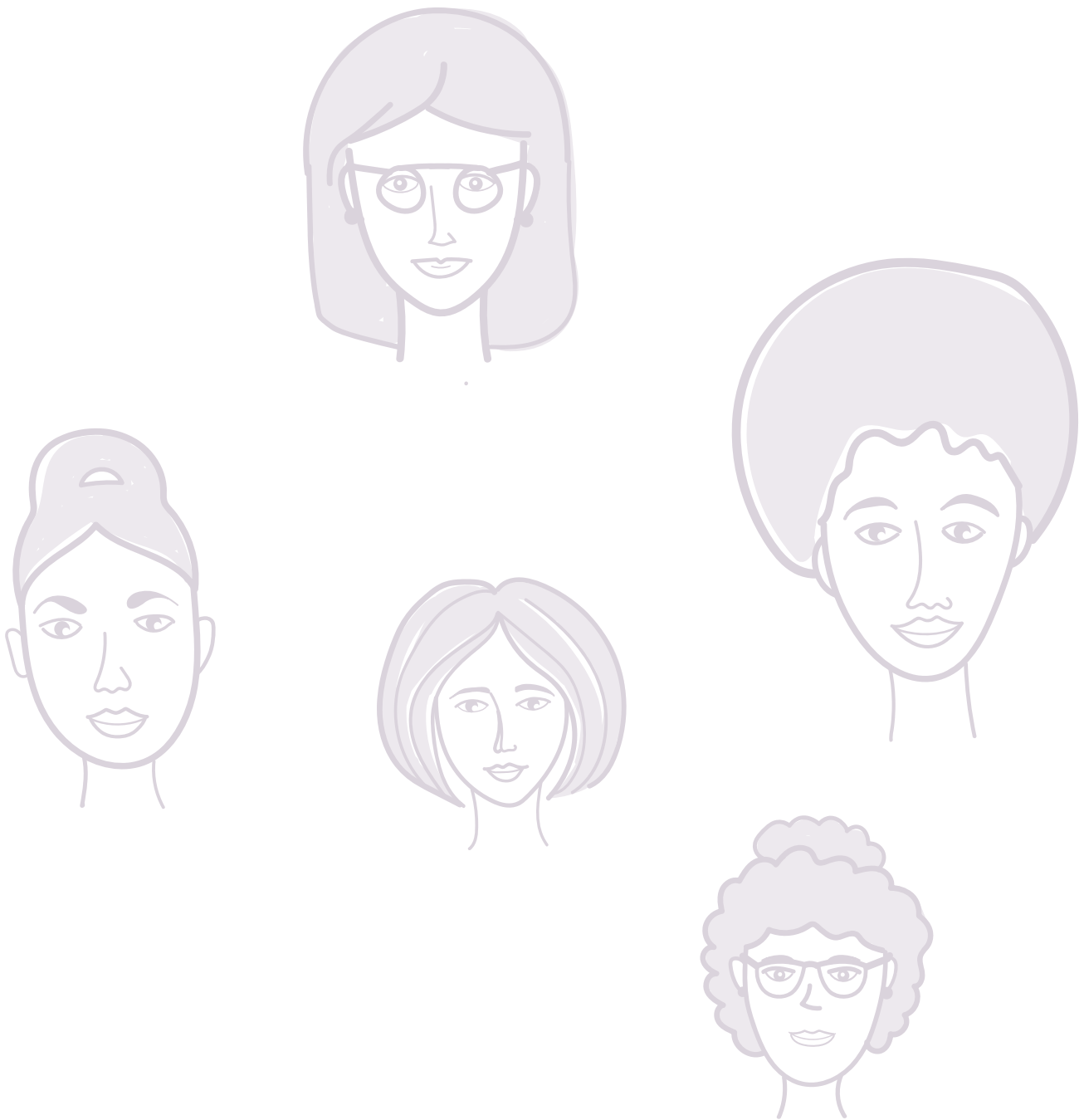


“**There is no greater force for change, for peace, for justice and democracy, for inclusive economic growth than a world of empowered women.**”

- Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women

Why Reykjavík?

Thanks to a strong women’s movement and social infrastructures including universal, affordable childcare and well-funded parental leave, Iceland has topped the [World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index](#) for 11 years running. That’s why it’s an excellent location for the annual Global Forum, and the title inspiration for Reykjavík Manual.



➤ The Reykjavík Manual is a living document, continually updated with new content and perspectives from women leaders worldwide.

This version was released on January 26 on the occasion of the Davos Agenda. Visit the Reykjavík Global Forum online for the [latest edition](#).

What's inside

Gather your tools

- Essential components 06
- Steps for best use 07

Take action

- Equality between women and men 08
- The Reykjavík Pledge 14

Keep learning

- Standout leadership 16
- The Reykjavík Index 18
- Supporters and contributors 20

Some assembly required

Essential components:

- A courageous leader (that's you!)
- A supportive team at work, at home, and in the community
- Global perspective
- Curiosity and a **growth mindset**
- Optimism for the future
- Belief in your power to make change

Steps for best use

1

Set aside time

Take a deep breath to clear your mind and refresh your thinking. Global problems can seem out of our control—especially during a pandemic.

2

Read through the actions

Highlight a few that strike a chord with you. Decide how you will approach each one. Schedule and plan next steps.

3

Start with one

Choose something you can try inside your organisation or community. Approach it like an experiment—don't judge results too harshly. If it doesn't work, adjust and try again.

4

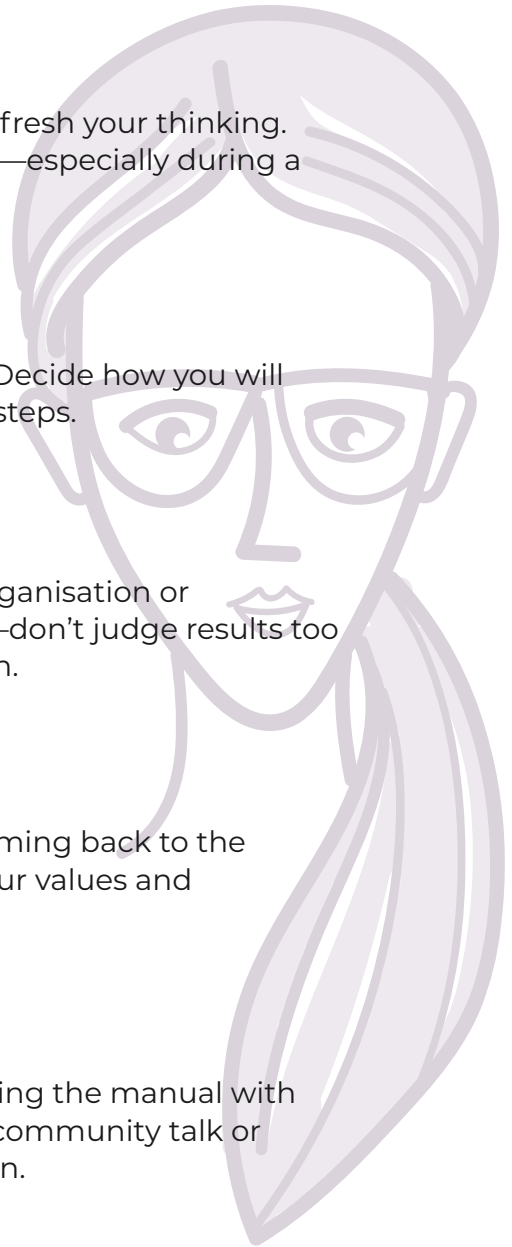
Revisit often

Pick it up whenever you need inspiration. Coming back to the manual will help you be intentional about your values and contributions to a better world.

5

Share openly

Post topics and learnings on social media. Bring the manual with you to a (virtual) conference, team meeting, community talk or coffee. Select a topic for discussion and dive in.



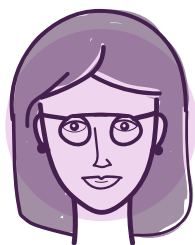
Equality between women and men

Progress towards equal
power and equal rights



Co-chair of the chapter: **Mastercard**

Get started on a more equal future.



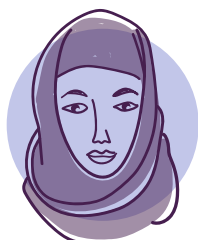
Take an honest look at how you react to women leaders.

How do you perceive women in power? Do you tend to trust or criticize? Do you rush to judgment or stereotypes? Challenge your habitual responses. See if you can be more open minded.



Be a role model for girls.

Reflect on your most influential role models: Were they famous, powerful, or globally recognised? Chances are your strongest role models were people from your everyday life. How might you be a role model to the children in your life and community? Consider volunteering for an organisation like [Inspiring Girls International](#).



Share a story of personal leadership.

Highlight the importance of equality by sharing a story about something or someone that taught you about equality. Talk openly and honestly.

Tip: *You don't need a big stage. Consider an upcoming one-on-one, staff meeting or team lunch.*



Teach your children about equality.

As a parent or sibling, friend or teacher, try to address gender bias in early childhood. Consult resources like this [toolkit for early childhood classrooms](#) endorsed by UNESCO-IICBA and the African Union. As children grow older, talk openly about prejudices faced by girls and women. Challenge them to be ambassadors of change for their generation. As [gender concepts form](#) between age 3 – 7, we can start kids on the right path.



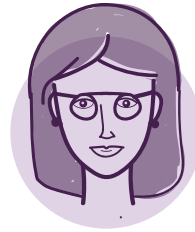
Set your own quotas.

Only participate in events that have equal (or a certain minimum) representation of women and men. If you're invited to speak on a panel, ask for information on the makeup of the group. When joining a board, call for equal representation and develop a plan for getting there by a specific deadline.



Get intentional about your newsfeed.

Scrutinise your media intake. Who do you follow on social channels? How might this sway your outlook? Follow people who champion equality such as [Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#). When posting or resharing, choose diverse photos and multiple perspectives. After reading media articles, reflect on the people interviewed or quoted. Was there equal representation of men and women? Post about your observations.



Adopt a healthier view of masculinity.

Support organisations that engage men and boys to challenge harmful gender norms. Research and replicate programmes on fatherhood and caregiving, youth and equality, and violence prevention such as [PROMUNDO](#). Rethink your own concepts of masculinity and leadership. The burden of inequality should not rest on women alone.

We must walk the talk when it comes to gender equality.

- Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General World Health Organization



Be more open about what you pay.

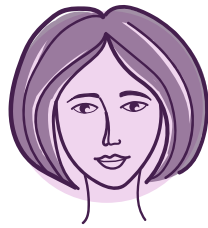
Research shows that [wage transparency can reduce pay gaps](#). Encourage your organisation to voluntarily report on gender pay. Read these [UK guidelines](#) for an example. Show your commitment with fair pay certification such as [Universal Fair Paycheck](#) or [The Fair Pay Workplace](#).



Fill the talent pipeline with more women.

COVID-19 has disrupted women in the workforce, contributing even more to the **broken rung** in the senior management pipeline. Encourage more women to apply for leadership positions in your organisation. Use your LinkedIn network to actively recruit female candidates. Make **job postings more inclusive** by removing gender-biased language.

*Companies with **more female leaders outperform their peers.***



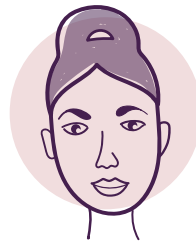
Move from mentor to sponsor.

According to **research**, a culture of sponsorship can help retain talented women, building stronger stepping stones towards equality. Invite your organisation to start a formal sponsorship program. Get commitment across leadership, as well as talent and diversity teams.



Establish family policies for all parents.

Among OECD countries, paid leave for fathers **tends to be far shorter** than for mothers. This gap, along with cultural stigma, makes men reluctant to take leave from work. Endorse fair parental leave policies while also reducing stigmas for men. Foster a workplace culture that appreciates Dads, and openly applaud those who choose time away. Encourage all working parents to share family stories and bring their whole selves to work.



Start a women's group for positive recognition.

Research has shown that **women are less likely to self-promote** than men. Launch a group whose sole purpose is to celebrate and encourage women at work. Kick off with a simple appreciation campaign; use existing channels on social media, or send postcards. And because **happy workers are more productive**, everyone wins.



Transform the employee experience.

Map your organisation's employee journey from start to finish: recruitment, hire, onboarding and training, career management to retirement. Where are women supported? Where has equality been lacking? What processes might be biased, such as promotion or assigning so-called 'stretch' roles? Brainstorm areas where you can improve.



Call for quality child care.

Without child care, many women cannot work. Some suggest the COVID-19 crisis could set women back a generation. Call on government leaders to ratify international labour standards on parental protections and child care. Push for government spending on quality care with appropriate skills training. For more ideas, check out these [WIEGO materials](#) available in multiple languages.



Value all occupations (not just male-dominated ones).

Petition for increased public funding and programs to support nurses, teachers, childcare and personal care workers, and other underpaid female-dominated fields. It's not enough to simply funnel more women into STEM and other fields; one U.S. study showed that [pay goes down for women](#) once the field is no longer majority male.



Fund an incubator for women entrepreneurs.

Offer funds or training to women-owned online businesses, which have [great potential to empower women](#) around the world—especially mothers and caregivers who cannot leave the house. Expand programs and learn from examples like International Trade Centre's [SheTrades](#).



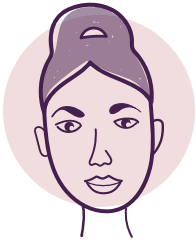
Fund more women's rights organisations.

In 2016, [only 1% of gender equality aid](#) went to women's organisations. Invest in local institutions that may appear too small or "risky" for mainstream funders. Pressure the international community to connect aid with women-led efforts. Donate to groups like [Womankind Worldwide](#) or [Global Fund for Women](#).



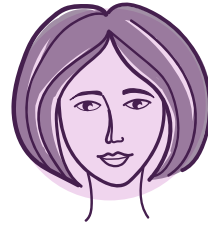
Press for equal access to land rights.

Land rights are key to economic security and empowerment. Yet [40% of economies still limit women's property rights](#). Legal recognition is an important first step—for example, in 2003 Rwanda [amended its constitution](#) to give every person a right to private property. Show your support by signing petitions with organisations like [Land Rights Now](#).



Champion equal representation in government.

Eighty countries have quotas or reserved seats for women in their nation's legislature, according to the [Gender Quotas Database project](#). But quotas won't work alone. Endorse women running for office: Donate your time, voice, influence or money to increase women's representation. If you are a woman, consider running for an open seat. You might create a ripple effect; in one [U.S. study](#), female candidates motivated other women to enter politics themselves.



Stand against sexual and domestic violence.

[Fewer than 40%](#) of female victims of violence seek help. It is time to break the silence and end the taboo. In Malawi, [women started a bold public movement](#) against sexual violence. Join a local or online movement to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. Visit the [Spotlight Initiative](#) for ways you can help. Look for toolkits like [this collection of best practices](#) from metoo.org on confronting sexual assault as a bystander, how to support a victim of sexual assault.

Get inspired

On equality

We Should All Be Feminists

by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men

by Caroline Criado Pérez

It's Not About the Burqa

by Mariam Khan

Feminisms: A Global History

by Lucy Delap

The Bluest Eye

by Toni Morrison

Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls

by Francesca Cavallo and Elena Favilli

Data and research

Equal Measures 2030 Annual report tied to the SDGs

Mapping Gender Data Gaps: An SDG Era Update

McKinsey's report on Women in the Workplace 2020

The Reykjavík Pledge

**Take positive action.
Accelerate progress.**

Each year at the Reykjavík Global Forum, women leaders submit personal commitments to deliver concrete and measurable actions over the next 12 months. The pledges align with United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Forum's goals towards women's leadership, visibility and influence. They are a call to action to build a better future and increase women's participation in leadership. Get inspired by real commitments to activate real change.

Join the Reykjavík Pledge!



Submit a pledge today!

Check out the [pledge tracker](#) to see where talk is transformed into action.

Explore [current pledges](#)





Women's strength, women's industry, women's wisdom are humankind's greatest untapped resource.

Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, WPL Global Advisory Board Member

Standout leadership

Women define what it takes

Hundreds of women leaders met virtually at the Reykjavik Global Forum, discussing leadership in the context of today's world, and what characteristics are needed to lead in a crisis and to lead with courage.

Leading through the pandemic

Are countries led by women in better shape than those led by men? One study of 194 countries shows that COVID-19 outcomes (cases and deaths) were **systematically better in countries led by women**. While researchers recognize the issue's complexity, they hope to shed more light on discussions about national leadership.

More reading

[Women leaders are better at fighting the pandemic](#)

[Do women lead differently during a crisis?](#)

Other scholars have highlighted the **potential influence of leadership styles**. "What we learned with COVID is that, actually, a different kind of leader can be very beneficial. Perhaps people will learn to recognise and value risk-averse, caring and thoughtful leaders." - Alice Evans, sociologist at King's College London, who studies how women gain power in public life.

Learning from women who lead effectively

Realistically, we can't expect women to climb through the ranks, break the glass ceiling, grab a seat at the table and solve the world's problems. Instead, we need a system that encourages all people—regardless of gender—to be standout leaders.

Organisations and nations benefit when any leader demonstrates so-called “female” or “softer” skills. Studies associate higher performance with empathetic leadership. Google learned their best teams used a variety of ‘soft’ skills like equality, generosity, curiosity, empathy and emotional intelligence.

The truth is that both women and men can lead with compassion and humility. Any leader can harness the power of emotion. We can all learn from standout women leaders, and raise the standards for effective leadership. Only then will we have the caliber of leaders ready to take on the next pandemic.

Do women lead with more patience, empathy, and compassion than men ?

“There is some sense that women lead differently than men,” Laura Liswood, Secretary General of the Council of Women World Leaders **told a reporter** at an event for International Women’s Day, *“but it’s hard to parse out if it’s because of gender differences or because women have historically been in the non-dominant group and men have been in the dominant group.”*

Straight talk: Confronting imposter syndrome

A 2020 U.S. report revealed many women leaders experience feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt at certain points in their careers—and say they believe it is commonly experienced.

How to help

Be a supportive boss

Supportive leadership is the #1 factor in reducing imposter syndrome.

Talk openly about feelings of doubt

Offer understanding, encouragement, and empathy.

Collaborate and cooperate

Teamwork helps combat cultures of perfectionism and anxiety.

Reject bias in the workplace

Learn 50 ways to challenge bias against women in leadership roles.

Support leadership development programs for women


Consider organizations like **Vital Voices**, offering skills training, capacity development, mentoring and networking across 182 countries and territories.

Reykjavík Index for Leadership

Measuring perceptions of equality for women and men in leadership

The Reykjavík Index for Leadership measures how people feel about women and men in leadership, and the perceived legitimacy of female vs. male leadership across politics and professions. The Index also measures whether women and men are viewed as equally suitable for positions of power. Countries measured include the G7 nations of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the USA, along with Brazil, China, India, Kenya, Nigeria and Russia.

Findings from 2020-2021 indicate that prejudices persist against women in leadership positions. In fact, younger age groups held less progressive views compared to other groups. These findings provide a clear target: We must help all generations to understand the importance and value of women's participation, and that everyone benefits from wider and more varied representation in leadership.

 [Download the Reykjavik
Index for Leadership](#)

Womens (in)visibility in the media

What is perpetuating the gap in perceptions of leadership?

Women and girls are largely underrepresented across society—in politics, news, entertainment and in the workplace. Yet a [recent cross-national study](#) shows that female politicians are still covered less by the media—even compared to their actual numbers in legislatures. How can we increase women’s visibility in the media?

More reading

[The Missing Perspectives of Women in News](#)

It is our goal to reach Index scores of 100 – an indication that there is complete agreement that men and women are equally suited to leadership across the economy, and a tangible sign of progress towards equality at work, at home and in society. The Reykjavik Index for Leadership will support the endeavours to get there.

Silvana Koch-Mehrin, President & Founder, Women Political Leaders

2030

is the UN’s target date for reaching the SDGs. [Generation Equality Forum \(GEF\) 2021](#) will be a key milestone along the next decade. Now is the moment for the wider community of leaders to mobilise, raise our voices, and instigate meaningful change in our governments, newsrooms, boardrooms, and communities.

Supporters and contributors

Many thanks to everyone who made the Reykjavík Manual possible

Our Co-Chairs

The Reykjavik Manual is supported by the Co-Chairs of Reykjavík Global Forum - Women Leaders. They act as the Patrons of this hugely important initiative.

Amy Weaver

President and Chief Legal Officer, Salesforce

Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen

Chief Executive Officer Plan International

Prof. Dr. Atsushi Sunami

President, The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Christy Tanner

Executive Vice-President, General Manager, CBS News Digital, CBS Corporation

Diane Wang

Founder & Chairperson, DHgate.com

Gita Gopinath

Chief Economist, International Monetary Fund

José Manuel Barroso

Chairman, Goldman Sachs International; Chairman, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; President of the European Commission (2004-2014); Prime Minister of Portugal (2002-2004), Member WPL Global Advisory Board

Katrín Jakobsdóttir

Prime Minister, Government of Iceland, Chair, Council of Women World Leaders

Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović

President of Croatia (2015-2020), WPL Ambassador for Immunization, Chair Emirata of the Council of Women World Leaders (2019-2020)

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President and CEO CARE

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Senior Economic Adviser, AEDPI; World Bank Vice-President, Africa Region (2007-2012) Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria, Member, WPL Board

Paul Kagame

President, Government of Rwanda, Chair of the African Union (2019)

Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women

Rebeca Grynspan

Secretary-General, Ibero-American General Secretariat, Under-Secretary General, United Nations (2010-2014), Vice-President of Costa Rica (1994-1998) Secretaria General Iberoamericana

Saadia Zahidi

Managing Director, World Economic Forum

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Director-General World Health Organization

Our key partner

Women Political Leaders (WPL) is glad to partner with The Rockefeller Foundation to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and shine a spotlight on women's leadership.

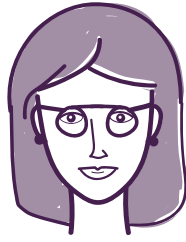
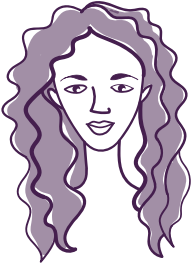
The partnership with The Rockefeller Foundation will help ensure that the role of women is at the centre of the discussions on how the world can 'build back better' post COVID.

As part of this partnership, WPL provides women leaders with a place to convene through the Reykjavík Global Forum. Discussions at the Forum have shaped the Reykjavík Manual, consolidating the many recommendations of women leaders into one living document. The Manual serves as a foundation for future conversations and activities to advance women's equality and leadership.

WPL is honoured to have been granted the possibility to support the mission of The Rockefeller Foundation.

Our global contributors

We wish to thank the amazing women leaders from around the globe whose ideas and inspirations brought this manual to life.



Take note:

What actions will you take to build back better?

Handwriting practice lines consisting of horizontal dashed lines, providing space for the user to write their response to the question above.





**If anyth
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...ning can ...e world, ...men can.

Vigdís Finnbogadóttir
...ld's first democratically
...ected woman President



