

2024

International Women's Day Invest in women: Accelerate progress

#InvestInWomen

Photo: UN Women/Oscar Levia.

Intellectual property (IP) offices and organizations around the globe are coming together to champion diversity within our offices and organizations and across the entire IP landscape. In countries worldwide, women face challenges and barriers in accessing resources, resulting in their stark underrepresentation in the IP ecosystem. Acknowledging this, our objective is clear: to drive inclusion and diversity to support, inspire, and accelerate increased participation from all women so that they can develop, commercialize, and distribute innovations and creative works. By investing in women, we believe we can better reach our collective aim to transform the challenges women face in the IP ecosystem into opportunities.

Despite comprising a significant portion of the micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise landscape, women entrepreneurs are facing a \$1.7 trillion finance gap that limits their potential to add \$10 trillion in economic value to the global economy by 2030. Furthermore, in 2023, inventors listed on international patent applications were five times less likely to be female than male. Studies also show women are underrepresented in design applications and copyright registrations. In addition, just one in three researchers is a woman, and women hold only one in five science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) jobs. All these facts underscore the urgent need for immediate and concerted efforts, both financial and strategic, to bridge this substantial gap. It's time to mobilize resources and implement impactful initiatives, to ensure that gender equality is not just an aspiration but a tangible reality.

We acknowledge that the diversity within our innovative, entrepreneurial, and creative community should mirror the diversity of our societies. Recognizing the vital importance of

ongoing collaboration between our offices, which has facilitated the exchange of best practices and the implementation of pioneering initiatives, we reaffirm our dedication to collective action. We remain steadfast in our commitment to empower and support women and girls from all segments of society to fully engage in the innovation and creativity economy. By enabling them to leverage their IP, we not only foster sustained growth but also pave the way for enduring success.

We are committed to investing in knowledge and skills-building initiatives designed to empower women in IP matters and, whenever possible, we will provide information about financial resources available to support inventors, creators, and entrepreneurs.

We recognize the importance of undertaking innovative research, enhancing – and being attentive to – the data available to provide insights into the status and needs of women in the IP ecosystem. We also pledge to promote science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) education which creates career opportunities for women and girls.

We commit to leveraging this year's World Intellectual Property Day theme "IP and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Building our common future with innovation and creativity" to advance our efforts to accelerate women's participation in the global innovation, entrepreneurship, and creativity ecosystem. We fully recognize that achieving gender equality and women's empowerment is integral to each of the 17 SDGs.

As we celebrate International Women's Day, we commit to continuing to work together and we encourage everyone to join us by taking part in this promising future by investing in women to accelerate progress.

International Women's Day joint message from:

- African Regional IP Organization • Algerian National Institute of Industrial Property • Angolan Institute of Industrial Property
- Antigua and Barbuda Intellectual Property and Commerce Office • ASEAN Working Group on IP Cooperation • Austrian Patent Office • Belize Intellectual Property Office
- Brazilian IP Association • Brazilian IP Agents Association • Bureau of Intellectual Property of Suriname • Business and IP Authority of Namibia • Cabo Verde IP Office
- Canadian IP Office • Companies and IP Authority of Botswana • Companies and IP Commission of South Africa • Companies and IP Office • Commerce and IP Office of St. Vincent and the Grenadines • Copyright Department of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic • Copyright Office of Tanzania • Corporate Affairs and IP Office
- Corporate Affairs and IP Office of Barbados • Department of IP of Thailand • Directorate General of the Industrial Property Registry Ministry of Commerce and Industries of Panama
- Egyptian Patent Office • Ethiopian Intellectual Property Authority • European Patent Office • European Union IP Office • French Patent and Trademark Office
- GCC IP Training Center • German Patent and Trademark Office • Hellenic Copyright Organization • Hellenic Industrial Property Organisation • Hungarian IP Office
- Industrial Property Institute of Mozambique • Industrial Property Office of Czech Republic • Industrial Property Promotion Service of Benin • IP Australia
- IP Office of the Philippines • IP Office of St. Kitts and Nevis • IP Office of Trinidad and Tobago • Israel Patent Office • Jamaica IP Office • Japan Patent Office
- Kenyan Copyright Board • Korean IP Office • Moroccan Industrial and Commercial Property Office • Mozambique National Institute of Cultural and Creative Industries
- National Center of Registries of El Salvador • National Directorate of Industrial Property of Uruguay • National Institute of Industrial Property of Brazil
- National Institute of Industrial Property, Republic of Chile • National Institute of IP of the Republic of Kazakhstan • National Intellectual Property Center of Georgia
- National Intellectual Property and Quality Service of Sao Tome and Principe • National Service of Intellectual Rights of Ecuador • Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago • Paraguayan National Directorate of IP • Patent Office of the Republic of Poland • Patents and Designs Registry of Nigeria • Qatari IP office
- Registrar General's Department of Ghana • Registry of Companies and Intellectual Property of Saint Lucia • Registry of Intellectual Property of Costa Rica
- Romanian Copyright Office • São Paulo IP Association • Spanish Patent and Trademark Office • State Agency of Intellectual Property and Innovation of the Kyrgyz Republic
- State Agency on IP of the Republic of Moldova • State IP Office of the Republic of Croatia • Turkish Patent and Trademark Office • UK IP Office • United States Copyright Office
- United States Patent and Trademark Office • World Intellectual Property Organization • Zambia Patents and Companies Registration Agency •

List of studies referred to in this joint message:

1. World Economic Forum. (2023). *"The finance gap for women entrepreneurs is \$1.7 trillion. Here's how to close it."*
2. UN Women. (2023). *"Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2023,"* 19.
3. EUIPO Study: *Women in design (2023)*
4. *Women in the Copyright System: "An Analysis of Women Authors in Copyright Registrations from 1978-2020, UNITED STATES COPYRIGHT OFFICE (2022)"*, p. 17.
5. UN Women. (n.d.). *"Women and the Sustainable Development Goals."*