

Launch of the HER FUND project

A pan-European network of gender-conscious investors to support female-led companies for growth and sustainability

In today's global landscape, network connectivity within and between innovation ecosystems is crucial for sustainable business growth. Despite improvements in innovation performance across EU countries between 2015 and 2022, a significant innovation divide remains, with high-performance groups (BCIEs) concentrated in Northern and Western Europe, and most Moderate and Emerging Innovators (LCIEs) in Southern and Eastern Europe.

Financial disparities are stark, with BCIEs attracting most investments, while LCIEs struggle with funding gaps. This issue is exacerbated for women-led startups receiving only 2% of European venture capital in 2022, and even less in LCIEs. The scarcity of female venture capitalists and Limited Partners further limits access to funding for women entrepreneurs.

HER FUND aims to bridge this gap by connecting gender-conscious investors with women-led companies, particularly in regions with lower innovation performance. The initiative seeks to create a cross-regional ecosystem to support emerging innovators, fostering collaboration and ensuring that women receive the resources and opportunities needed for success.

Launched on March 2024 for a duration of 2 years and coordinated by The Edge, HER FUND is a European Horizon project bringing together 9 partners spread across 7 countries, representing both Better-Connected Innovation Ecosystems (BCIE) and Less-Connected Innovation Ecosystems (LCIE). Each partner brings unique expertise in foreign investment, innovation systems, start-ups, women entrepreneurship and women-led companies.

To achieve its objectives, the project is built around 4 main steps:

- Landscape analysis and mapping
- Co-design and co development of programmes
- Experimentation and validation of the programmes
- Acceleration and scaling

We have launched the project website and social media, where people are demonstrating a great interest in our activities. During these first months we have started to work on the different activities and finalized different types of communication materials (a flyer, a poster, a roll-up banner) available on the project's website (<https://herfund-project.eu/communication-materials/>) to raise awareness of the project.

To receive our updates, follow us on [Twitter](#) and join us on [LinkedIn](#)!

To learn more about the project, please visit our website: <https://herfund-project.eu/>

Contact

Coordinator – Anne-Charlotte Joubert

The Edge

contact@herfund-project.eu