

Female Entrepreneurship: Pioneering Sustainable Cycles for a Better Tomorrow

Female Founders Award Ceremony 2024

Berlin, March 20, 2024 – The **American Chamber of Commerce in Germany (AmCham Germany)** hosted its fifth Female Founders Award Ceremony. "Female founders play a crucial role in the German economy, offering diverse perspectives and innovative approaches. Initiatives like the Female Founders Award emphasize the importance of women in leadership, fostering a culture of diversity and innovation vital for economic dynamism across the Atlantic. We celebrate the remarkable achievements of women who have dared to dream big and break barriers in pursuing their entrepreneurial passions," stated **Dr. Marianne Janik**, CEO, Microsoft Germany, and Award Patron of the Female Founders Award.

This year, two female founders have distinguished themselves with innovative solutions spanning various industries. Their business models are making significant strides in providing eco-friendly alternatives within the textile, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors.

The winners of the Female Founders Award 2024 are:

- **Viktoria Kanar, Co-Founder & CEO, Re-Fresh Global**
- **Carmen Rommel, Co-Founder & COO, BIOVOX**

Re-Fresh Global, co-founded by entrepreneur **Viktoria Kanar**, is disrupting the textile industry through its ground-breaking technology which transforms textile waste into new raw materials. Re-Fresh Global has introduced comprehensive solutions and products aimed at reshaping the current linear textile industry – be it by sustainably disposing waste, providing an eco-friendly alternative to traditional pulp materials, and a patented bio-plastic formulation that significantly reduces the carbon footprint associated with manufacturing processes. "I know that our path is not a quick and easy one, but I truly believe that there is no other option if we want to leave a better, cleaner, and more responsible world to the next generations. I am particularly delighted that AmCham Germany chose me as recipient for this award, because beyond the German market we truly hope to be able to establish a permanent presence in the U.S., which will surely benefit from our solution," Kanar added.

BIOVOX, co-founded by **Carmen Rommel**, pioneers medical grade bioplastics for a sustainable and circular healthcare industry. Currently, healthcare plastics are not future-proof: They cause over 90 million tons of carbon emissions each year, and many are on regulatory phase-out lists. With a unique positioning for long-term regulatory compliance, a broad material portfolio and deep industry-specific and technical expertise, BIOVOX provides a convenient and cost-efficient solution for MedTech, pharma, and lab manufacturers to transition to a sustainable circular economy. "I am delighted to have received the Female Founders Award 2024. It is a recognition of how important our goal of a sustainable healthcare industry is. AmCham Germany provides a large network for us to take BIOVOX a big step forward," Rommel noted.

Prominent speakers during the ceremony included **Dr. Amy Gutmann**, U.S. Ambassador to Germany, **Dr. Marianne Janik**, CEO, Microsoft Germany, and Award Patron of the Female

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Founders Award, **Alexa Gorman**, Deputy Chairperson of The Supervisory Board, High-Tech Gründerfonds and Co-Founder, encourageventures e.V., and **Prof. Dr. Torsten Oltmanns**, Regional Chair of the Berlin Brandenburg Chapter of AmCham Germany and Managing Director at Center for Sustainable Transformation at Quadriga University. **Xenia Scholl**, Co-Founder & COO, Aitonomi AG, and Female Founders Award Recipient 2019, moderated the panel discussion.

The following founders were shortlisted for the award:

- **Dr. Gesa Biermann**, Co-Founder & CEO, Pina Earth
- **Julia Kahle**, Co-Founder & CEO, heynanny
- **Vivian Loftin**, Co-Founder & Managing Director, Recyda

Following individuals comprised the independent jury:

- **Nadine Bütow**, Head of Communications Europe, LONGi Solar and member of Digital Media Women e.V.
- **Dr. Guido Brinkel**, Head of Regulatory Policy & Director Corporate Affairs, Microsoft Germany
- **Constanze Freienstein**, Partner, AlixPartners DACH
- **Maria Gross**, Managing Director, GERMANTECH
- **Carolin Schäufele**, CEO and Managing Editor, SHE works!
- **Xenia Scholl**, Co-Founder and COO, Aitonomi AG
- **Andreas Schwaiger**, Vice President and Managing Director, Texas Instruments Germany
- **Prof. Dr. Torsten Oltmanns**, Regional Chapter Chair Berlin Brandenburg, AmCham Germany; Managing Director at Center for Sustainable Transformation, Quadriga University

“The Female Founders Award recognizes those who have taken risks and founded innovative companies, thereby contributing to the values of the transatlantic partnership. With this award, we emphasize the importance of entrepreneurship, innovation, and a diverse corporate culture,” remarked **Simone Menne**, President of AmCham Germany.

About the Female Founders Award

With the Female Founders Award, AmCham Germany aims to provide a visibility and networking platform for female leaders and highlight the role women have in entrepreneurship and innovation. The award seeks to honor women who have founded solid businesses based on unique ideas and, thus, motivate other women to become entrepreneurs themselves as they are still in the minority of the start-up ecosystem on both sides of the Atlantic.

AmCham Germany’s Female Founders Award is a proud supporter of the **EMPOWER HER Initiative**, a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Commerce and the AmChams in Europe (ACE) Network to advance women’s economic empowerment in the workplace and support women-led entrepreneurial endeavors.

You can read more about the Female Founders Award [here](#).

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You can find the German version of this press release here.

About AmCham Germany

The American Chamber of Commerce in Germany is the voice of transatlantic business. We enhance global economic and trade relations built on a strong foundation of the German-American partnership. We actively support and promote our members' interests through our global network in business, politics and AmChams worldwide and strengthen the exchange between our members and political decisionmakers. AmCham Germany enables cross-cultural understanding, cooperation, and new investment. We stand for transparent dialogue, unrestricted trade, and a competitive and open business climate.

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