



Damen Female Inspiration Event focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Female Inspiration Event took place on Thursday, June 13. During this session, attendees were focused on the voices of women within Damen.

FEMALE INSPIRATION EVENT - JUNE 13TH

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in all aspects of our business are fundamental values at Damen. We are committed to creating a work environment where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. As a global company, we recognize and value our workforce's diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives. We strive to create a work environment where all voices are heard and all employees feel valued, respected, and able to achieve their full potential. During this event we will focus on the voices of women within Damen. Next time we will include men and an international panel. You are invited!

Program:

Introduction by Dirk de Bruin
Inspiring panel discussion lead by Annelies Damen
Talks & Drinks

Ready to be inspired about the value of all individuals in our workspace?
Please be my guest and secure your seat now (limited seating).

Time: 16hrs-17:30 hrs
Where: Conference room A4.001 Gorinchem or online via teams

[Register here](#)



The event was initiated by Annelies Damen, Member of Supervisory Board, and Dirk de Bruin, HR Manager, Damen Global Support: “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in all aspects of our business are fundamental values at Damen. We are committed to creating a work environment where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. As a global company, we recognize and value our workforce’s diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives. We strive to create a work environment where all voices are heard, and all

employees feel valued, respected, and able to achieve their full potential.”

The event began with an introduction and an engaging quiz that set the stage for discussing thematic issues. After that, participants had a powerful panel discussion that emphasized the importance of raising awareness about DEI.

Olena Zhukova, MDEM Director, was invited to share her own experience as a woman in industry.



I'm currently in Romania on the Galati shipyard. We are opening a company, Marine Design Engineering Galati here, so a lot of attention is required. Firstly, what motivated me to pursue the leadership role in our industry, of course, it is the choice of industry itself. I was born in Mykolaiv, it was, it is, and it will be the shipbuilding center of Ukraine.



My father has been working in National University of Shipbuilding, so that the whole childhood I was communicating with people engaged in shipbuilding activities. I started my career in shipbuilding in Shipyard Ocean, and I had a lot of good examples and also different from all my previous experience. I never felt for changing the industry and leadership career, it came by itself. I started with this position 17 years ago and I still keep it. I'm proud to be Ukrainian, to be Director. And I hope now, which keeps me in the industry, to be able to support Ukrainian Navy for our victory. So that is really a strong motivator.

The future is not easy to predict. I'm very happy that I have chance to be with the people who talk about future more than their current activities. So the future is intellectual perspectives. There are numerous fields of knowledge which are necessary for women. Shipbuilding industry is a big field for applying different skills and competencies. It is sustainable, and it will become even more sustainable. So it is an attractive working environment.

There are a lot of talks about whether it is an appropriate place for a woman to be in shipbuilding. It's a challenging, high-tech, global, and male dominated industry. So it requires personal development. Of course, definitely they have, a lot of us women have these talents, and they can be developed and exploited in shipbuilding."

As Dirk de Bruin noted: "...when the war started, we were really impressed by everything you did for your colleagues and the energy you still have every day in this battle and ahead, by running a business on several locations outside your own country and just keep on going...", and received a response from Olena: "It was also a lot of support of Damen, which enabled us to stay where we are now. And Ukraine is my motherland. So what I could do, I did. And I hope that with the attention to Ukraine, there will be definitely better hope. And we are in this practical and high-tech rational world use a lot of prayers for different reasons day to day."

Annelies Damen summarised: "In a male-dominated industry, the conversation about diversity is crucial. We need to think about our future and the younger generation. The time for change is now – it's necessary because it can be lonely at the top, as I can personally attest. Our focus should not be on our differences, but on what unites us."

Many of the traditional societies still regard women the weaker gender, deliberately giving them a supporting role. Women in Damen disprove this simplistic belief, feeling respected and supported. Due to Annelies Damen and all colleagues who shared their experiences, this feeling of support stands even stronger and motivate to overcome any challenges. <<