



70TH Anniversary

ICSB Signature Event

PARIS

November 3-4, 2025

ICSB.ORG/ICSB-EVENTS/PARIS



Welcome Message



With great excitement and pride, we welcome you to the ICSB Signature Event in Paris, hosted in collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

This two-day seminar unites policymakers, scholars, and entrepreneurs to explore the barriers and opportunities in women's entrepreneurship and how innovative policies can unlock dynamic growth.

Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of ICSB, this event stands as both a historic milestone and a formula for the future. It builds on the ongoing collaboration between the OECD and ICSB to strengthen global entrepreneurship ecosystems and empower women through research-driven, actionable policy frameworks.

As we look ahead, ICSB reaffirms that everyone must be at the table —governments, educators, entrepreneurs, all stakeholders, and doers—to co-create the next chapter of entrepreneurship built on empowerment and shared value.

Best wishes,

Dr. Ayman ElTarabishy,

President & CEO, ICSB - Founder of MSMEs

Day



Leader in Global Innovation



Rico Baldegger

Research Professor, Sawyer Business School, Suffolk University

Rico Baldegger is an accomplished entrepreneur, researcher, and educator specializing in entrepreneurship, strategy, and innovation at Suffolk University's Sawyer Business School in Boston. He also serves on the Board of the International Council for Small Business and as President of the Board of Trustees for the Swiss Sustainability Foundation.

Holding degrees from the University of St. Gallen and a Ph.D. in SME and Entrepreneurship from the University of Fribourg, Professor Baldegger brings deep academic insight paired with extensive real-world experience. His leadership background spans human resources, IT, branding, and management consulting, as well as entrepreneurial ventures across Europe and the United States.

A prolific author with more than 100 publications, including several best-selling books such as *The Future of Business Schools*, he is widely recognized for his research on innovation, start-up growth, and the internationalization of SMEs. Regularly invited to speak across Europe, the U.S., and Asia, including at the United Nations for MSME Day, Professor Baldegger is a passionate advocate for sustainable entrepreneurship and global collaboration.



Event Program

Day One – November 3, 2025

*OECD Headquarters, Paris, France,
OECD Conference Centre, 2 rue André Pascal, 75116 Paris*

Plenary Sessions (Minimal Details)

(For full information, refer to the official event website.)

- 09:30 – 09:45** | Welcoming Remarks, OECD and ICSB representatives
- 09:45 – 11:15** | Session 1: Access to Finance – Launch of OECD/GWEP Report
- 11:30 – 12:45** | Session 2: Insights from Entrepreneurs
- 12:45 – 14:00** | Lunch
- 14:00 – 15:30** | Session 3: Women Digital Entrepreneurs
- 15:30 – 16:00** | Coffee & Networking
- 16:00 – 17:30** | Session 4: The Future of Women's Entrepreneurship Policy
- 17:30 – 17:45** | Closing Remarks
- 18:00 – 19:30** | Cocktail Reception, Salon des Nations, OECD Conference Centre

Day One provides an overview of key themes and discussions. For detailed speaker lists and session descriptions, please visit the event website.



Day Two – November 4, 2025

Research & Education

08:45 AM – 09:15 AM: Coffee & Check-in

09:15 AM – 10:35 AM:

**SESSION 1A (Room 1 MB S226) | Structural Barriers and Systemic Inequities:
Examining Institutional Obstacles Across Sectors and Contexts**

Session chair: Rita Grant

Paper 1A.1 (09:15-09:35)

From Bench to Business:

Addressing Structural Inequities for Women Entrepreneurs in Biotech and Health Innovation

Sara Mahdavi (Harvard University and University of Toronto)

Paper 1A.2 (09:35-9:55)

Female Entrepreneurship in Sub-Saharan Africa:

Barriers, Stakeholders, and Strategies for Resilient Training Models

Fatimata A. Ly-Baro, Zokha Butt, Jodi-Ann Haynes & John M. York (Le Mans University)

Paper 1A.3 (09:55-10:15)

Beyond the Glass Ceiling:

High Equality, Low Representation — Barriers to Women's Corporate Leadership in Latvia

Irina Sennikova & Olga Dzene, (RISEBA University of Applied Sciences)

Paper A.4 (10:15-10:35)

An Exploratory Study on the Forthcoming Entrepreneurship Skills

Delia E. Mateiaş, (The Research Institute of The University of Bucharest and The Ionian University), Richard Hammett (Walden University and the EITRI) and Gary R. Low (Texas A&M University-Kingsville and the EITRI)

Event Program



Day Two – November 4, 2025

09:15 AM - 10:35 AM:

**SESSION 1B (Room 2 MB S036) | Cultural Context and Social Identity:
How Culture, Language, and Identity Shape Entrepreneurial Journeys**
Session chair: Winslow Sargeant

Paper 1B.1 (09:35-9:55)

Do Words Shape Who Becomes an Entrepreneur?

Evidence from Gendered Language in Entrepreneurship Education

Kimberly Eddleston, Kristen Madison, Chioma Okpalaeke, Jerald Wallace & Torsten Pieper (Northeastern University)

Paper 1B.2 (09:55-10:15)

Fempreneurial Intelligence:

Overcoming Systemic Barriers through Emotional and Cultural Intelligences

Kristīne Kutuzova (RISEBA, Riga)

Paper 1.3. (10:15-10:35)

Building on EPIC:

Toward Rigorous, Replicable, & Relevant Impact Assessment in Entrepreneurship Education

Norris Krueger

10:35 AM – 11:00 PM: Coffee Break

Coffee Break for Networking



Day Two – November 4, 2025

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM:

**SESSION 2A (Room 2 MB S036) | Networks, Finance, and Capacity Building:
Support Systems that Enable Growth and Sustainability**

Session Chair: Rita Grant

Paper 2A.1 (11:00-11:20)

***Formal Networks as a Lever for Legitimacy and Inclusion in Women Entrepreneurship:
Preliminary Evidence from Ongoing Research***

Cécile Gras-Bazin & Annabelle Jaouen (MBS School of Business, Montpellier)

Paper 2A.2 (11:20-11:40)

Uniqueness and Gender: Rethinking Value Propositions in Equity Crowdfunding

Claudio Bonvino, Vincenzo Buttice & Cristina Rossi-Lamastra (Politecnico di Milano)

Paper 2A.3 (11:40-12:00)

Entrepreneurial Behavioral Competencies Early-Stage Entrepreneurs Must Master to Avoid Derailment

Margaret Johnsson & Lisa Hollis-Sawyer (Bridgewater State University)

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**SESSION 2B (Room 2 MB S036) | Work-Life Integration and Community Building:
Momprenueurship, Refugee Entrepreneurs, and Social Capital**

Session chair: Rico Baldegger and Christian Meisel

Paper 2B.1 (11:00-11:20)

Balancing Acts: Exploring Momprenueurial Pathways – Full-Time, Part-Time and During Parental Leave

Hannah Jensen & Christine K. Volkmann (University of Wuppertal)



Event Program

Day Two – November 4, 2025

Paper 2B.2 (11:20-11:40)

Opportunity Creation by Women Refugee Entrepreneurs

Rebecca Reuber & Sophie Alkhaled (University of Toronto)

Paper 2B.3 (11:40-12:00)

Cultural Barriers and Strategic Approaches to Gender Equality in Entrepreneurship,

Alena Křížková & Marie Pospíšilová (Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences)

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM:

SESSION 3A (Room 1 MB S226) | Policy Interventions and Promotional Programs:

Critical Examination of Policies and Support Initiatives

Session Chair: Rita Grant

Paper 3A.1 (12:00-12:20)

Can Women's Entrepreneurship Really Be Promoted?

Carin Holmquist & Anna Kremel (Stockholm School of Economics)

Paper 3A.2 (12:20-12:40)

Collateral Benefits and the Promotion of Women's Entrepreneurship in Ireland:

The Case of the RESPONSE Initiative

Colette Henry, Teresa O'Rourke, Trudie Murray, Lana Repar, Joe Bogue, Breda O'Dwyer & Amanda Kearns
(Dundalk Institute of Technology)

Paper 3A.3 (12:40-13:00)

Identification of Content and Communication Channels for Successfully Addressing and Activating Women for Entrepreneurship

Natalia Gorynia-Pfeffer & Armin Baharian (RKW Kompetenzzentrum, Germany)



Day Two – November 4, 2025

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM:

**SESSION 3B (Room 1 MB S226) | Digital Entrepreneurship and Technology Enablers:
How Digital Platforms and Tech Literacy Unlock Entrepreneurial Potential**

Session chair: Rico Baldegger

Paper 3B.1 (12:00-12:20)

Computer Science Literacy for Women Entrepreneurs– Identifying the Linking “Bits”

Sundar Balakrishna (Government of India, Vijayawada)

Paper 3B.2 (12:20-12:40)

How Digital Content Platforms Lower the Barriers for Women Entering Entrepreneurship

Eileen Fischer (Schulich School of Business, York University)

Paper 3B.3 (12:40-13:00)

Navigating Barriers, Harnessing Enablers: A Functional Model of Women’s Technopreneurship in Kenya

Richard Wamalwa Wanzala & Nanziri Elizabeth Lwanga (Stellenbosch University)

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM: Lunch Break and Networking

Power Lunch at OECD and continue to network.

Start planning your travel to Station F.

Transportation will not be provided.

Event Program



Day Two – November 4, 2025

3:15 PM – 6:00 PM:

Site Visit: Station F: The world's biggest startup campus (Optional)

Welcome, walking round, coffee

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM:

Experience at Station F shared by HEC Paris & Entrepreneurs

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM:

Presentation by Station F, Junior Conference Room

STATION F stands as a transformative force in the French innovation ecosystem. Once fragmented and under-recognized, France's startup landscape has been unified and elevated through the creation of this ambitious hub. By gathering over 1,000 startups and world-class innovation partners under one roof, STATION F has become a central point for collaboration, visibility, and rapid growth, helping position France as a global leader in entrepreneurship.

The vision began in 2013 when Xavier Niel purchased a former railway depot with the bold goal of turning it into the world's largest startup campus. Despite early skepticism—including from national leaders—STATION F opened in 2017 and quickly exceeded expectations. It now houses a dynamic community of startups supported by services, investors, and corporate partners, enabling them to scale and innovate with impact.

Today, STATION F is recognized not only as a French success story but as a model for global innovation ecosystems. It is home to the largest AI startup community in Europe and continues to drive forward-thinking entrepreneurship. The site visit offered a powerful look at how bold ideas, when executed with clarity and commitment, can reshape an entire national and regional innovation narrative.

Transportation: On Your Own.

Address: 5, Parvis Alan Turing, 75013 Paris



About the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities

The **OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities** provides comparative statistics, analysis, and capacity building for local and national actors to work together to **unleash the potential of entrepreneurs and SMEs**, promote inclusive and sustainable regions and cities, and boost local job creation and tourism policy.



About the International Council for Small Business (ICSB)

Founded in 1955, the **International Council for Small Business (ICSB)** is the **world's oldest organization devoted to advancing the development and growth of small businesses globally.**

ICSB connects academics, policymakers, and entrepreneurs to build a more humane, inclusive, and sustainable global entrepreneurship ecosystem.



ICSB Signature Event

P A R I S

November 3-4, 2025

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



70th Anniversary

icsb.org/icsb-events/paris | info@icsb.org

2201 G St. NW Fungler Hall, Ste 315
Washington, DC, 20052 USA