

HARVARD ALUMNI ENTREPRENEURS

COUNCIL FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

IDEAS NEED CHAMPIONS





OVERVIEW

Every aspiring entrepreneur has an idea. A seed. A capsule of pure potential searching for the right conditions to thrive. The right resources. The right funding. The right networks. These conditions are not easy to find. Even for entrepreneurs from Harvard. Many exceptional ideas and efforts fail to reach their full potential.

Ideas need champions. Even and especially the best ideas.

For women entrepreneurs, the journey from seed to success is even more challenging. They and their ideas face hurdles most of their male counterparts never see. Any of these obstacles, at any time, can derail even the most promising of projects, stifling innovation, smothering growth, and ultimately impeding their ability to grow and prosper.

HarvardAE's Council for Women Entrepreneurs is dedicated to addressing disparities, bridging gaps that disproportionately affect women founders, and facilitating their path to success.



COUNCIL FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS



The **Council for Women Entrepreneurs (CWE)** is an initiative of Harvard Alumni Entrepreneurs to bring together a dynamic network of alumni and friends passionate about elevating alumnae entrepreneurs and innovators to new heights.

Over the next two years, **CWE** will bring together a collaborative network that builds community and provides opportunities tailored to women's growth and success.

Join us in making the shift from “**What if?**” to **What is.**” where aspirations are transformed into realities because *ideas have champions* who nurture and drive them forward.

The statistics are startling:

- Only 2% of venture funding goes to women founders.
- Women receive just 5% of all small business loans despite owning 42% of businesses.
- Women-founded companies are 63% more likely to receive less funding than their male counterparts, even though they deliver twice as much revenue per dollar invested.

FEATURES

- **Personalized Experience.** Every entrepreneurial journey is unique. Our Initiative is designed to offer bespoke support and resources, through one-to-one mentorship, customized workshops, and peer groups.
- **Faculty and Mentors.** Entrepreneurs, educators, and investors, with unparalleled experience, provide practical, real-world knowledge and techniques to the program.
- **Curated programming.** Our programs are designed to empower women entrepreneurs at all stages of their journey. We provide essential skills, expert-led workshops, networking opportunities, and access to mentors. Each program is tailored to help entrepreneurs grow and succeed.
- **Peer Mentoring.** We've integrated a novel and powerful "peer mentoring" process to forge ties between program participants and enhance mastery of key concepts and tools.
- **Local Synergy.** Local events, workshops, and mentoring create opportunities for women to connect, learn, and collaborate where they live. All while benefiting from the connection to our global community.
- **Network Effect.** As our network grows, women entrepreneurs can tap into an expanding wealth of knowledge, funding, and partnerships. This network can accelerate their business growth, drive innovation, and amplify their voices in a supportive environment conceived to meet their unique challenges.

What if?

What if Katherine Johnson's mathematical genius hadn't been recognized, what the impact could have been to the first U.S. manned spaceflights?

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Startup Bootcamp for Women** An immersive, ten-week program to help aspiring and early-stage women founders launch and scale their startups. Open to all women entrepreneurs.
- **FoundHERs Circle** An 8-week peer-to-peer program designed to create a supportive community of alumnae entrepreneurs to share experiences, challenges, and successes with curated workshops and speaker series. Exclusively for alumnae members.
- **Local Councils** Local Councils are designed to build ties at the local level, provide support and community, and expand our reach and impact in key regions. Led by alumnae for alumnae entrepreneurs.
- **Access to Capital** With only 2% of venture funding going to women, there is a clear need to focus on providing access to capital. Through our Investor Network, CWE can facilitate introductions between alumnae, angel investors, venture capitalists, and other funding sources. We can host Pitch events where alumnae can present their businesses to potential investors.
- **Virtual Community** Our online platform, MyHAE, supports a virtual women's community where members connect, share resources, provide support, and more. Exclusively for alumnae members.
- **Annual Summit** A yearly, in-person event that gathers CWE participants, sponsors, and supporters for networking, workshops, and inspirational talks.

What if?

What if Estée Lauder's pioneering cosmetics business, started from a passion for beauty and innovation, hadn't found its initial investors, leaving the beauty industry without one of its most iconic brands?

CASE STUDY: IAMBIC

MAEVE WANG, CO-FOUNDER



Maeve Wang, AB '11, is the Co-founder and CEO of IAMBIC, an AI-driven custom sneaker company. Inspired by her foot pain, Maeve applied to the Harvard Alumni Entrepreneurs Accelerator powered by Pegasus Tech Ventures to bring her vision to life.

One might have thought that Maeve would have had second thoughts about entering the customization arena. Bigger names like Levi's had tried. She was undeterred.

Initially IAMBIC didn't have the traction required for the accelerator. It was her exceptional drive and passion that convinced us of her potential.

During the 10-week Accelerator program, she received weekly guidance from her lead mentors and had access to over 50 subject matter experts who helped her refine her business strategy, product development, market positioning, and pitch.

Since the Accelerator, IAMBIC has raised more than \$3 million and was named a TIME Best Inventions of 2023. Their innovative approach to shoe design has earned them recognition from the US National Science Foundation. The patent applications for their 12 inventions, including their AI technology, are pending.

We were right. Maeve has what it takes to succeed.

What if?

Madam Marie Curie never received the support to isolate radium, revolutionizing medical treatments and setting the foundation for the fight against cancer?

HARVARD ALUMNI ENTREPRENEURS



Harvard AE is an international non-profit organization with 20 chapters worldwide, connecting 19,000 alumni, faculty, students, and friends, from across the university and around the globe.

The network is global, yet the entrepreneurial journey is local. Our chapters across the globe provide a rich tapestry of resources tailored to support and elevate alumni entrepreneurs and innovators.

We don't just foster entrepreneurship. We support and sustain a vibrant community where leadership and lifelong learning are at the heart of everything we do. As the premier hub for Harvard's entrepreneurs, we unlock a world of opportunities. Whether sparking change or scaling new heights, we are the community to grow, connect, and succeed.

Ideas need champions. Let us be your champion.

WHAT WE DO

- **Global Network. Global Impact.** Our network bridges all of Harvard's 13 schools. Our reach extends around the entire world. This fusion of global knowledge with the full spectrum of Harvard's expertise enables us to foster dynamic outcomes with outsized impact. Counting over 19,000 alumni, faculty, and friends, our network can mobilize energy, experience, and resources in over 100 countries, from Australia to India to the UK. We bridge cultures, continents, and disciplines to help ensure that great ideas become great startups.
- **Access to Knowledge.** Knowledge is crucial for success. Our programs are available to those "beyond the Yard:" Startup Bootcamps, eLabs, and Academy programs that offer structured learning. Our Thought Leadership Writing Incubator nurtures influential voices. The HAE Invites podcast delivers industry insights. Our Accelerator helps alumni-founded startups reach the next level. And our Global Pitch Competition series showcases innovative alumni ideas.

- **We Build Community.** We are far more than the sum of our 20 chapters. We are a community built on shared values, interests, and intent. Our people convene regularly, in person and online, to share ideas, compare experiences, and provide encouragement. We are there at every step of their journey as they transform their ideas into viable and impactful enterprises.
- **Giving Back.** Today, more than ever, getting from idea to enterprise requires vision, courage, and stamina. Leadership, lifelong learning, and community are at the heart of these, and at the heart of everything we do. All made possible by over 250 volunteers who share their time and expertise. We are a community that helps entrepreneurs shape and scale their business.





AT A GLANCE



20

of chapters



19,160

community members
101 countries



88

% founders/
c-suite execs



250

of volunteers
worldwide

- BOSTON
- BUENOS AIRES
- CANADA
- CENTRAL FLORIDA
- CHICAGO

- CHINA
- DENVER
- EUROPE
- HONG KONG
- INDIA

- MENA/GCC
- NEW YORK
- NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
- SEATTLE
- SINGAPORE

- SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
- SOUTH FLORIDA
- UNITED KINGDOM
- WASHINGTON, DC



Harvard Alumni
ENTREPRENEURS

ENTREPRENEURS WITH IDEAS



Yehong Zhu, Accelerator '23



Maeve Wang, Accelerator '23



Debbie Dickson, Accelerator '22



Michelle Frye, Accelerator '24



Kate Flynn Accelerator '23



Olga Gomonova, Accelerator '24



Kidist Tesfaye, Accelerator '23



Vanessa Liu Accelerator '24

Featured on the cover

HARVARD ALUMNI ENTREPRENEURS

COUNCIL FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

IDEAS NEED CHAMPIONS

GET IN TOUCH

CWE@harvardae.org

www.harvardae.org/initiatives-cwe

What if?

What is.



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