



**FRIEDRICH NAUMANN  
FOUNDATION** For Freedom.

IAF

# Empowering Women in Politics

03 - 15 March 2024

Gummersbach, Germany

## Abstract

**“For me, a better democracy is a democracy where women do not only have the right to vote and to elect but to be elected.”**

**- Michelle Bachelet, head of UN Women, former president and defense minister of Chile**

Over the past few years, we've seen the world grapple with the harsh realities of a once-in-a-generation pandemic. And, just as we began to imagine a world beyond Covid-19, we witnessed the biggest military aggression since World War II as Russia invaded Ukraine, causing widespread instability and devastation, not just for the two countries involved, but for the region, Europe, and the world.

In several countries around the world, democracy itself seems under attack, with an uprising of populist parties threatening freedoms and liberty. Taken to the extreme in some instances, hard-won rights that saw women participate in activities such as education, employment, and making free choices around their partners and their bodies, have even been cruelly withdrawn.

This is a time of great complexity, enormously fast-paced change, huge technological advances, a climate crisis, societal and geo-political shifts, and for women, all against the backdrop of a long history of deeply entrenched inequality.

The deck still appears stacked against women, with data showing that women are underrepresented in decision-making structures in all types of organisations around the world. But we can spark change. At various times of crisis, strong, inspirational women have stood up, pushed for rights, demanded recognition, and changed the world. Perhaps these latest global crises provide us with yet another opportunity to shift the boundaries.

We would like to see a world in which women are on equal footing to step into the leadership roles they desire, and to make a much-needed contribution in the world. This seminar therefore invites female leaders who are passionate about leadership, about making a contribution, and committed to building an active career in politics or public service, to join on a journey of connection, development and transformation as we explore the many aspects of female leadership in 2023 and beyond.

**“You never have to ask anyone permission to lead. When you want to lead, you lead.”**

**- Kamala Harris**

# TOPICS

## **Societal, regional and political trends and events affecting and impacting women**

At a meta level, we will unpack the current status of female leadership, and start to analyse the causes of inequality and the very slow changes in addressing this. We will examine the concept of leadership, and set the framework for transformational work in each individual's leadership journey.

## **Creating a Thinking Environment**

Participants will be introduced to the Thinking Environment, including some of the tools used to support them to think for themselves with rigour, imagination, courage and grace. These tools will be used throughout the seminar.

## **Developing a Personal Brand**

Participants will be supported to work with the concept of branding: examining their own purpose, values and vision, thereby developing their personal brand, arriving at a brand offer to support their leadership journey.

## **Stakeholders and Influencing Others**

We will explore the importance of understanding our stakeholders, and the value of empathy in engaging with them. We will uncover ways to broaden our sphere of influence, and practice negotiation skills to achieve our goals.

## **Communication Skills**

Participants will focus on their own communication style, and learn to recognise how others communicate, gaining new skills in this critical area of leadership, which includes managing the complex and often hazardous area of the traditional and social media.

## **Cultivating an organisational culture that supports female leadership**

Given the reality that the culture in many organisations does not support the promotion of women into positions of leadership or power, we will explore ways to influence this, and spark change by building organizational cultures that support women.

## **Building a strong network of support**

No leader can excel without a strong network of support. Participants will assess their current situation and examine ways to build on this.

## **Wellbeing**

This seminar will provide space for conversations around wellbeing, mental health, achieving balance, and grappling with imposter syndrome.

# TARGET GROUP

Purpose-driven female leaders who are currently in office, or with political or public service aspirations from Political Parties, Think Tanks and NGOs are encouraged to apply. Applicants can be elected officials or appointed staff members, provided they are in leadership, or aspire. Applicants should have a strong English-language ability, and be willing to share their experiences in the group, as the programme relies on interaction and active participation.

# METHODOLOGY

This in-person seminar is a highly interactive and engaging experience, drawing on a vast variety of modern participant-driven methodologies and formats, designed for maximum interaction and engagement. It extends beyond a classroom-style learning environment, and instead the facilitators will create a space in which transformational relationships can be built, experiences can be shared openly and honestly, and in which the participants can learn from one another, and with guest experts, in an easeful and inspiring way.

# OBJECTIVES

Building a deep understanding of the particular experience of women leaders as individuals, as well as in the local and global spheres, this seminar will support and strengthen the development of political leadership skills in a group of liberal women from around the world. The session will provide opportunities to build strong global networks and forge valuable value-driven relationships with one another, and to share experiences of female leadership in their own contexts.

Exploring methodologies to expand influence, way to communicate well and to build networks of support around them, participants will be better equipped to impact and contribute in their various roles: as liberals, as women, as leaders.

# Facilitators



## Penny Tainton

Penny has held numerous leadership roles, both in a liberal political party, as well as in government. Now running her consultancy, evolve, her most recent role as Project Lead, Governance in the Democratic Alliance, included a diverse range of projects to build capacity and systems in the organization. Penny was also central in the design of systems and processes for post-election coalition negotiations, preparing Mayors to govern in their new term and rolling out an innovative online development programme for governments which incorporates both technical and leadership skills. Penny previously worked on strategic projects for two Premiers in the Western Cape Government in South Africa. The most recent of these saw her lead the progress and delivery of War Room teams using Harvard University's Problem Driven Iterative Adaptive (PDIA) methodology to address complex transversal problems in government. This followed a role in the Delivery Support Unit of the Western Cape Government, managing two of the then Premier's Game Changers (priority projects), both working to transform education. Earlier roles included that of Executive Director of Policy & Governance for the Democratic Alliance and serving on the IEC's National Party Liaison Committee for several years. Penny's expertise includes an extensive understanding of the processes and practices of governance, organisational development, legislation, and performance tracking and management initiatives. An involved citizen of South Africa and the world, Penny is passionate about extending her services to areas of society where she can make a difference, bring about positive change and realise improved standards. A major driver in her work is finding innovative solutions to the inequalities and injustices that remain in society.



## Marike Groenewald

Marike Groenewald is the founder of Anew, an organisational and leadership development consultancy based in Cape Town, South Africa. Holding a Master's Degree in Law, Marike has pursued a career as a developer of people and facilitator over many years, and in various organisations. She was until 2015 employed by a political party as the Executive Director of Development and Learning. In this role, Marike was responsible for the development and learning needs of almost 700 members of staff and nearly 2000 public representatives. In November 2016, Marike graduated as an Ontological Coach through Australia's Newfield Institute. Marike's professional focus, interest and experience lie in the fields of leadership development, specialist and niche leadership programme design and consulting, organisational change, advanced personal and team development, facilitation and coaching. Marike is an accredited facilitator of the Thinking Environment and is passionate about creating a space where individuals can think at their best, and for themselves with ease, courage and freedom. In 2015, Marike was selected as one of the Mail and Guardian's 200 young South Africans. She is a fellow of the 2016 Westerwelle Foundation's Young Founders Programme and in 2018 Marike presented a TEDx talk in Germany on courage. Marike works with leaders, start-ups, political parties, think tanks, NGOs, and companies around the world and regularly facilitates seminars at the International Academy for Leadership in Germany.

# The Foundation

We, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, promote individual liberty, free and open societies and free markets in Germany and throughout the world. To us freedom is the guiding principle in policy making. We believe that free and open societies are the only societies that allow human beings to decide for themselves what is best, to develop their full potential and to pursue their dreams. This is what we mean when we claim to value human dignity. And it is freedom that produces prosperity. Together with our counterparts – who all share a similar set of values – we support initiatives in Germany and abroad that serve to enhance respect for the rule of law, private property and human rights, that foster tolerance and that strengthen economic freedom rights and democracy.

The programs of the Foundation's International Academy for Leadership (IAF) form an integral part of our international work and offer Liberals from all parts of the world opportunities to engage in dialogue, an exchange of ideas, networking and cooperation. We aim to inspire.

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**Venue:** **International Academy for Leadership (IAF)**  
Theodor-Heuss-Straße 26  
51645 Gummersbach  
Germany

**Language:** English

**Registration:** 01 December 2023

**Registration fee:** 270.00 €



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