



We are Brief.

ELENA BATURINA'S FOUNDATION LAUNCHES DESIGN EQUALITY WITH INNOVATION: A GLOBAL STUDENT COMPETITION IN SUPPORT OF SDG#5

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DESIGN EQUALITY with Innovation marks the seventh edition of the international competition held within BE OPEN's ongoing programme dedicated to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Organized by the socio-cultural initiative BE OPEN, the contest welcomes submissions from students, recent graduates, and emerging professionals. Its purpose is to inspire young creators to develop forward-thinking ideas that contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable world, in alignment with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Agenda.

According to the UN Department of Economic and Social Development, empowering women and girls is a key driver of economic progress and social advancement: equal participation in the workforce could raise global GDP by over 10%.

Recognizing this, BE OPEN dedicates its 2025/2026 competition to advancing SDG 5 – Gender Equality. The initiative seeks projects that highlight and support women's roles in innovation, community development, and sustainable entrepreneurship. Entries promoting gender-inclusive solutions and spotlighting women as inventors and business leaders are especially encouraged. The most outstanding works will receive grants between €2,000 and €5,000, access to educational programmes, and an invitation to a major international event on sustainability.

A successful businesswoman and a supporter of innovation Elena Baturina, Founder of BE OPEN, speaks about the project: *"For the past six years, we at BE OPEN have worked to support the SDGs by running international student design competitions. Each iteration has without fail impressed us with outstanding, well-researched, creative projects from young people all over the world. This time we hope to employ the intellectual boldness and creative power of younger people to bring us closer to equality and empowerment of girls and women, therefore creating more leaders of sustainable change".*

As global challenges grow more complex and interconnected, traditional methods often fall short. Addressing today's urgent issues demands fresh thinking, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and bold experimentation. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals—especially those tied to gender equality—calls for systemic transformation and innovative, integrated responses.

BE OPEN believes that creativity is central to building a sustainable future. Meeting the SDGs requires unconventional ideas, design-driven thinking, and practical creative action. Design, as a discipline, can serve as a catalyst for meaningful change and as a powerful tool to implement the UN's vision for sustainable development.

Founded and supported by philanthropist Elena Baturina, BE OPEN operates globally as a think tank championing creativity and innovation. Its mission is to empower people and ideas that can shape a better tomorrow through a range of activities—competitions, exhibitions, conferences, master classes, and cultural projects—all aimed at unlocking the world's creative potential.