

## “Women in STEM”: A project to nurture the participation of women in the sciences.



Confindustria's Fondazione Giuseppina Mai, in collaboration with the Bracco Foundation and Assolombarda's Steamiamoci project, is promoting female participation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) studies by offering concrete opportunities for advancement to talented female students.

The aim is to reduce the high rate of early drop-outs among women in science subjects and encourage them to complete their studies.

The figures showing the gender gap in scientific subjects make dispiriting reading. Italy has fallen to 79th place out of 146 countries for gender equality, according to the Global Gender Gap Report 2023 of the World Economic Forum. The gap is particularly wide in the technical-scientific sector. ISTAT, the national statistics institute, reports that fewer than 40% of graduates in technical and scientific subjects are women. Among STEM graduates in the 24-35 age group, just 24% are women, a significant shortfall. Meanwhile, despite an increase, the number of women with management roles in STEM-related industries as of 2020 remains low at 20% of the total.

This is why we must encourage girls to study these subjects. Recognizing the by now pressing need for gender equity in STEM fields, Fondazione Giuseppina Mai of Confindustria launched the "Women in STEM" project in 2021. Since its inception in 2004, Fondazione Giuseppina Mai has been dedicated to fostering collaboration between industry, research, and institutions, with a particular focus on empowering

younger generations.

In 2023, a renewal of partnerships led also to an increase in the number of scholarship prizes. Seven scholarships worth 3 thousand apiece were awarded to the most deserving female students enrolled in the first year of master's degree programmes in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The project, now in its third edition, is part of the Bracco Foundation's ongoing commitment to the delivery of equitable and fair educational opportunities for young people through ProgettoDiventò. Closing the gender gap is a cardinal aim of the Foundation, which promotes freedom of access to knowledge, helps some young women to arrive at informed career choices and others to build on their professional skills, all the while advocating for the greater presence of women experts in positions of leadership.