**Commission on the Status of Women**

**UNOOSA Virtual Side Event**

**Liftoff: Space Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality**

**8 March, 14:00 – 15:15 CET**

**Overview**

The priority theme ofsixty-seventh session of the [Commission on the Status of Women](https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw) is “Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls”.

Technology and innovation have the potential to advance gender equality and support women and girls worldwide. The digital empowerment of women is central to realize their rights as digital technologies can facilitate access to education, information, and expand access to social and economic opportunities. Yet, the digital gender gap prevents them from becoming both developers and consumers of technology, perpetuating inequalities. The inclusion of women is crucial to ensure that their concerns and experiences are integrated in the design and development of products and services, and to address the global challenges of the 21st century.

Space sciences, technology, innovation and exploration contribute to improving humankind and the sustainability of our planet. Digital tools and space applications are crucial in areas such as climate change, disaster response, agriculture, transportation, health, communication, and many more. Space technologies are fundamental to provide internet connectivity and access to quality education, even in remote and isolated communities.

With women representing only 20% of the space workforce and 11% of people who travelled to outer space, closing the gender gap in the space throughout the cycle of education and employment is a key prerequisite for inclusive social, economic and technological transformations. Moreover, the technologies and applications of the space sector must also be responsive to the needs of women and girls and achieved by taking a gender lens across this work. Taking action on both these fronts will help to ensure a sustainable future where women and girls can fully realize their rights and be leaders.

**Objective**

As part of the 67th session of the Commission on the Status Women and to celebrate the International Day of Women, the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs will organize a CSW67 side event to discuss with space experts how space technology and innovation can empower women and how to make the space sector more inclusive. Panelists will share personal insights on challenges and successes with the aim to inspire and support women and girls, and women’s organizations, in their space journey.

**Format**

The session will be structured as a moderated panel discussion with 4-5 speakers. The discussion will be centered around the following questions:

* Why does space matter? How does it advance SDGs?
* How is space technology and innovation empowering women and girls? What more can be done to realize this potential?
* What are the most successful policy measures and good practices in the space arena to attract and retain women and girls, achieve gender parity including in decision-making, and fully leverage women and girls’ potential?
* Could you share a personal insight on a challenge or success during your career?
* What would be your advice to a girl/woman in the space sector?

**Speakers**

Video message from:

* **Niklas Hedman**, UNOOSA Acting Director
* **Lisa Campbell**, Canadian Space Agency President (TBC)

Speakers:

* **Sandra Cauffman**, Astrophysics Division Deputy Director, NASA
* **Jennifer Breslin**, Executive Director and Co-Founder, Futuristas
* **Hyun-Ok Kim**, Senior Researcher/Dr.-Ing., Korea Aerospace Research Institute
* **Basuti Bolo**, Endowed Chair Education Technologies, Africa University
* **Artemis Westenberg**, CEO, Explore Mars & President of the Netherlands Association for Women’s Rights (TBC)

**Target audience**

Representatives of governmental entities, academia, private sector, civil society, and international organizations.

**Connection details**

The event will take place through the Teams platform.

Please register here to attend the event: <https://bit.ly/3E7U69N>

The link to the event will be sent on 5 March.

**About UNOOSA and Space4Women**

The [United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs](http://unoosa.org/) works to promote international cooperation in the peaceful use and exploration of space, and in the utilisation of space exploration, science, and technology for sustainable socioeconomic development.

Space for Women is an initiative of UNOOSA to promote women’s empowerment in space. The objective of Space for Women is to raise awareness about gender equality in the space sector; to strengthen and deliver targeted capacity-building activities; to encourage women and girls to pursue space and STEM education and careers; and to contribute to achieving SDG4, Quality Education and SDG5, Gender Equality.