

BASF launches CONNECT.SHARE.INSPIRE Women's Leadership Conference with partners

- **Ahead of International Women's Day, six industry-leading companies join forces to promote women in leadership**
- **CONNECT.SHARE.INSPIRE is an exciting initiative led by BASF and Schneider Electric in collaboration with Bosch, Bilfinger, Henkel and Bouygues**
- **Over 170 women, business leaders and experts come together to share experiences of creating an inclusive environment, with a particular focus on gender balance**

On 28 February 2024 BASF along with its partners Schneider Electric, Bosch, Bilfinger, Henkel and Bouygues brought together over 170 inspiring women, business leaders and experts to share insights and knowledge, celebrate the contributions of women in industry and join discussions on creating an inclusive work environment with a particular focus on gender balance.

Connect.Share.Inspire - a women's leadership conference is a joint initiative from six industry-leading organisations that aims to provide a platform for networking, professional development, and personal growth for women and female future leaders in industry. The full-day event was held at the former Free Trade Hall, now The Edwardian Hotel, Manchester, a venue with a significant history, and broached topics around the power of influencing, authentic leadership and gender health.

Member of the Board of Executive Directors, BASF SE, Dr Katja Scharpwinkel shared her career experiences and challenges with an engaged audience during her Keynote Speech. “Openness is the value I appreciate the most,” commented Katja. “Being open to a diversity of mindsets, thoughts and ideas allows us to discover new ways, new solutions and new partnerships. Events like Connect.Share.Inspire allow us to do just that. They provide an opportunity for us all to come together and celebrate the progress we are making while also having real conversations about how we can challenge ourselves to create a more inclusive environment.”

Julia Raquet, President Europe, Middle East, Africa, BASF SE took part in a lively and candid senior executive panel discussion on women in leadership. “At BASF we value diversity, in people, opinions and experience,” explained Julia. “Our aim is to ensure that each individual feels valued, and fully supported in achieving their personal best. Always, and without exception. Supporting and taking part in today’s Connect.Share.Inspire conference alongside a broad variety of people has confirmed and brought to life the vital importance of those values.”

The event stemmed from an idea sparked during a discussion between Thomas Birk, Vice President BASF in UK & Ireland and Kelly Becker, President Schneider Electric UK & Ireland. The two organisations joined with industry peers Bosch, Bilfinger, Henkel and Bouygues to host a day of presentations, panel sessions and networking opportunities, all with a focus on gender balance. From discussing the experience of women in leadership positions to talking openly about gender health, the event aimed to create a platform for women to share, reflect and learn from each other on topics touching on gender equality in the workplace.

Thomas Birk commented, “I am delighted that we have joined with Schneider Electric and our other partners to create a space where future leaders can share their experiences honestly and with meaning and impact. Holding events like Connect.Share.Inspire allows us to openly discuss how we develop and retain our female talent. I am very proud of the work we are doing in the UK, across BASF and with our partners to better support girls and women to thrive in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) sectors. This is important to us

not only because of the values we share as a company but because closing the gender gap in STEM is intimately linked to the future success of our industry.”

Diversity and Inclusion are cornerstones of BASF’s corporate values of creativity, openness, responsibility, and entrepreneurial spirit. Promoting diversity in the selection and development of their leaders is a key aspect of this commitment. To this end, BASF has set a global target to promote female leadership and aims to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions to 30% by 2030.

Karen Harper, Head of HR Services UK & Ireland, commented: “In the UK, we have worked to contribute towards this global BASF goal and are delighted that BASF plc achieved this target in 2023. This is a step in the right direction and with the support of our active employee-led groups and partner organisations, such as Inclusive Employers, we are committed to continuing to make progress towards gender equality and more broadly creating a diverse and inclusive workplace.”

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About BASF

At BASF, we create chemistry for a sustainable future. We combine economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility. Around 112,000 employees in the BASF Group contribute to the success of our customers in nearly all sectors and almost every country in the world. Our portfolio comprises six segments: Chemicals, Materials, Industrial Solutions, Surface Technologies, Nutrition & Care and Agricultural Solutions. BASF generated sales of €68.9 billion in 2023. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchange in Frankfurt (BAS) and as American Depositary Receipts (BASFY) in the United States. Further information at www.basf.com.