

KEY LEARNINGS

# SHE CONFERENCE

2024

Oslo Spektrum

April 11th

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# Introduction

The Social Human Equity (SHE) Conference 2024, held at the Oslo Spektrum on April 11, marked our ten year anniversary. Every session at the conference was a reminder that growth is perpetual and multifaceted. From workshops on AI, leadership, and diverse boards, to cross-sector panels discussing global collaboration, trends in impact investing, health equity, energy solutions, and much more.

This milestone event stands as a testament to our commitment to fostering a space where we listen, learn, and act together, promoting the social dimension of sustainability.

Over the past decade, this platform has grown, becoming an important space for those dedicated to advancing social sustainability.

As we move forward, let's commit to creating an environment where all voices are heard and promoted, especially those that have been and still are marginalized.

We are immensely proud of this community and grateful to be on this journey with you and to be able to have conversations that are both challenging and inspirational.

An important message is that **now is the time to act**. We hope that the key learnings shared in this document, along with the conference itself, will provide you with the tools needed to rethink, hold yourself accountable and create real change.

Let's reflect, adjust, and celebrate the progress we've made and continue our shared mission to build a more just and sustainable future. This year's conference has set a powerful framework for us to consider, "**What is the next move?**"

**Astrid Skaugseth,**  
**CEO of SHE Conference**



# The Business Case for Social Sustainability



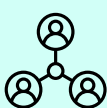
Research shows that more diversity in boards and executive teams correlates with higher social and environmental impact scores.



Diverse leadership teams are associated with a positive impact on the ethical disposition and general image of a company.



Companies focusing on social sustainability attract and retain top talent.



Social sustainability fosters stronger relationships with communities and stakeholders.



Increased legislation underscores the critical importance of social sustainability Be ahead of your competition!



An authentic commitment to all aspects of sustainability creates both an internal and external positive reputation.

Companies performing well for both gender and ethnic diversity in executive teams are on average **9%** more likely to outperform their peers.

Meanwhile, those underperforming for both are **66%** less likely to outperform financially on average, up from **27%** in 2020, indicating that lack of diversity may be getting more expensive.\*



# Key Figures

The SHE Conference is Europe's leading business conference with a focus on social sustainability. In our current geopolitical climate, this arena for change and committed action has become more important than ever. In 2024, we gathered:



**2,500+** physical attendees.



**Thousands** of global digital viewers (final count will be July 31st 2024).



**45+** corporate partners and collaborators.



**120+** speakers across **3** main stage sessions,  
**20** sessions on **5** sector specific side stages,  
**6** workshops, and **6** live studio sessions.

# Listen. Learn. Act.

As we continue to process the wealth of insights and inspirations from the 2024 SHE Conference, it's crucial to reflect on our learnings and plan our path forward to 2025 and beyond.

Our main stage, side stages, and workshops featured a series of focused cross-sector sessions. Our inspiring speakers and partners taught us what needs to be done and how to do something about it.

This year's conference also introduced our Listen. Learn. Act. (LLA) framework.

Hopefully both the actionable practices presented at the conference, the LLA framework, and our reflections will help answer the question of what **YOUR** next move will be. The aim of LLA is to ensure that the energy and promises made during the conference will have tangible impact, and to ensure that it is not confined to a single space or moment in time.



# Listen.

**Lead by Listening.** This year's conference underscored the importance of leading by listening. Active listening forms the foundation of genuine empathy and understanding, which is crucial in the fight for social sustainability.

# Learn.

**Grow by Learning.** By staying informed and adaptable, we can better advocate for and implement policies that advance social sustainability.

# Act.

**Change by Acting.** Change comes through deliberate, informed action. This often begins within yourself, and small changes you make can lead to great changes around you.

# Key Learnings

## **Moving Beyond Lip Service**

True progress requires more than words; it demands action. We must move beyond mere commitments and pledges, implementing concrete, measurable strategies that deliver on our promises. This requires:

- Bold leadership
- Concrete actions
- Walk the talk

## **Mistakes are a Part of Progress**

Change is rarely a linear process. To foster innovation and improvement, we must be willing to embrace our imperfections and take risks, recognizing that failure is part of growth. By daring to experiment and learn from our missteps, we can create meaningful, long-term change that aligns with our values. This requires:

- Psychological safety
- Good feedback cultures
- Flexibility

## **Inclusive Leadership**

Inclusive leadership creates a culture where every voice is heard and valued. Leaders who practice inclusivity are adept at listening to diverse perspectives, advocating for underrepresented groups, and empowering all members of their teams to contribute to the organization's vision.

This requires:


- Diverse teams
- Inclusive work cultures
- To recognise and utilise the value of diversity

## **Use YOUR Voice**

Every individual's voice matters in the pursuit of social sustainability. Rather than remaining silent or passive, we should actively champion causes that align with our beliefs and values. Together, we can create resilient organisations where progress is driven by commitment and shared purpose. This requires:

- Opposing views and challenging discussions.
- Room for everyone to use their voice
- Using YOUR voice boldly

# Actions

Based on these key learnings, we have shortlisted a couple of essential actionable practices. These are only the tip of the iceberg, if you and your company would like additional support please contact us on [post@sheconference.no](mailto:post@sheconference.no) 

- Align DEI goals with your company's mission and values to create a shared sense of purpose
- Implement mentorship and sponsorship programs to support the career development of employees tailored to their unique needs
- Provide training programs for management teams to develop skills in active listening and inclusive leadership
- Implement systems for capturing lessons learned from both successes and failures, and integrate these insights into future strategies
- Diversity Management - as a leader it is your responsibility to understand and implement important concepts and acquire this competence

**Lead by listening**  
**Grow by learning**  
**Change by acting**



# Feedback

This feedback is gathered through participant surveys, social media analysis, and evaluation meetings.

- Some attendees, who had not previously engaged with similar events, found the experience surprisingly impactful and fitting their needs perfectly
- Attendees found the conference inspiring with impressive speakers sharing diverse perspectives
- The SHE Conference is an important space for leadership development and it is a vital space for all leadership groups
- The conference had a vibrant atmosphere with open and curious participants, fostering real human connections
- SHE's emphasis on diversity and inclusion, covering a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives including gender, ethnicity, age, disabilities, and sexual preferences was experienced as positive

- Recognition of the importance of understanding biases and promoting a broader perspective
- Participants left with a renewed sense of hope and inspiration for a better future
- The conference was noted for bringing together a diverse group committed to advancing gender equality and empowerment in the workplace
- The conference facilitated important discussions, prompting attendees to reflect on the topics discussed
- Many attendees were emotionally moved
- Networking - the conference is a key arena for sharing competence and experiences across industries
- A lot of participants stated that they received a true and deep understanding of why the social dimension of sustainability is important for business growth and future profitability

# What is next?

Change cannot happen in a vacuum. The roadmap from the insights of the SHE Conference is our blueprint for action. Let's move forward with purpose and passion, knowing that our collective efforts can and will promote social sustainability and long-term sustainable growth.

## **Our further actions include**

The continuation of the LLA framework through this year and 2025.

Long-term strategic partnerships in order to strengthen the impact of the LLA framework.

Developing a written statement of accessibility and a code of conduct.

A new conference in April 2025, stay tuned - exciting news will be shared soon!



# Contact

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