

## Fibank's Smart Lady is among the winners at the prestigious European Excellence Awards 2018

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The PR campaign launching the Smart Lady business program of Fibank won a prestigious award at the European Excellence Awards 2018. The ceremony took place at an official gala in Dublin, Ireland on December 6. The annual European Excellence Awards were created 11 years back, with the purpose of honoring the most outstanding achievements of communications professionals in their fields.

This year, 290 projects took part in the competition, divided into 58 categories and shortlisted from a total of 1,500 candidates. The Smart Lady program of First Investment Bank won in the Balkans category, competing with global brands such as Philips, Procter & Gamble and Avon. The winner in each category is selected by online voting and a two-day meeting of an expert jury consisting of 38 marketing and PR specialists. In its final evaluation of applications, the jury is guided by the criteria of innovation, implementation, communication strategy, and achieved results.

Smart Lady is a new program specially tailored for Bulgarian women in business. It includes various banking products with preferential terms and a range of financial and non-financial solutions that offer support and security to female entrepreneurs. The program is designed for women-run and women-owned companies.

The Smart Lady program of Fibank was first introduced in March this year, confirming the Bank's intention to support business ladies in Bulgaria by offering them favorable financing terms, participation in various forums and trainings, as well as other incentives such as grace periods on loans during maternity. The program features longer repayment periods, as well as insurance policies against accident or illness from FiHealth Insurance covered by Fibank.

"The Smart Lady program is not merely a product for financing entrepreneurs, but a complex platform integrating a number of factors. It was created by men and women thinking in the same business direction. For the first seven months after the launch of Smart Lady, more than 200 female entrepreneurs have taken advantage of its benefits. Among the sectors of special interest for the program are: trade, services, education, transport and logistics, hospitality, agriculture, online trade and others. The program is also open to microenterprises, the current ratio of its clients being 50:50 between SMEs and microbusinesses. By the end of the year, two more important stages of the program are scheduled to place: a series of targeted trainings in different cities of the country, and launching an online platform to be used by women as an information, educational and networking tool," said Ms. Ilona Staneva, Director of Marketing and Advertising at Fibank.

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