

## Fresh Support for Green Projects: Fibank and Mastercard Launch a Sustainable Lady Fund

Thursday 24 June, 2021

The Smart Lady Club, supporting women entrepreneurs in Bulgaria, is back! The Club's first live event for the year was attended by 26 successful business ladies who discussed their plans, current and future projects, and visions for business development. The topic of the event, organized by First Investment Bank, was: „Innovative ideas with a mission: Protect the environment“.

During the meeting, the Sustainable Lady Fund was presented as part of the Smart Lady program. The Fund's objective is to support innovative green projects of Bulgarian women entrepreneurs and it was created by [First Investment Bank](#) in partnership with Mastercard.

As of July 23, ladies who want to become part of the Fund will be able to apply fully online through the Smart Lady website, and a competent jury will evaluate their proposals. The top ranking projects in two categories will receive funding, each in the amount of BGN 5,000, for implementation of the boldest and most sustainable projects. The lucky winners will be announced at a special ceremony in October in the capital Sofia. A month later, the organizers are also planning to launch a socially responsible initiative in support of the Fund's activities for 2022, so that it can lend a hand to even more innovative ideas aimed at environmental protection.

„The Sustainable Lady program will be further developed and upgraded in order to meet the needs of our customers and of their innovative, environmentally friendly businesses. Never before has it been so important to show responsibility not only to each other but also to future generations and our bank will make a point of doing this. Every day!“, were the comments from First Investment Bank.

Mastercard believes that innovation is meaningless unless it radically improves the wellbeing of people and of the planet as a whole. In 2020 Mastercard made a commitment to support 25 million women entrepreneurs around the world, so that they may be included in the digital economy by 2025. The joint project with Fibank is part of this long-term global commitment. Sustainable Lady is also among the first initiatives of the green network of global and local projects of Mastercard in support of the environment.

„The age of digitalization has changed not only us, but also the way we do business. I am here to support women entrepreneurs who have the courage to start something new, something of their own. We at Mastercard encourage new ideas, and even if they are focused on environmental protection, we stand firmly behind them,“ said Vanya Manova, Mastercard manager for Bulgaria, Northern Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo.

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