



Vocational Education and Training

Knowledge Transfer Awards for Women

Premios Transferencia de Conocimiento

de la Formación Profesional

Promising Practice

Implemented by: FPEmpresa (Asociación de Centros de Formación Profesional) together with Esprinet Group

Where: Spain

Status: Began as an annual competition in 2022

Summary: The Vocational Education and Training Knowledge Transfer Awards Knowledge Transfer Awards are designed to reward teams of VET students (at least half of whom should be women) who propose a technologically innovative idea supporting the achievement of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. The Award is implemented by FPEmpresa (the Association of Vocational Training Providers) and the company Esprinet Group.

Overview

The vocational education and training (VET) for Women promotes knowledge transfer between the VET system and the business sector and promotes gender equality by recognizing female participation in vocational training. The annual competition is open to more than 700 VET centres which are part of FPEmpresa (representing 16% of all VET Spanish centres and 36% of all VET Spanish students in VET). To be eligible, providers must propose a project which gives a technological solution to a real-life problem and a team which is at least 50% comprised of women VET students or with a female team leader.

The Awards have been created to align with international goals and promote women pursuing tech in the VET system in Spain. The competition is promoted and implemented by FPEmpresa which launches the outreach to VET providers and organizes the submission and independent evaluation of the proposals. The competition and its prizes are funded by the Esprinet Group which works in high-tech products and supports the digital and green transitions. The company participates in the United Nations Global Compact promoting responsible business practices. As part of its support, staff from Esprinet Group provides student mentoring and training sessions with participating VET providers and their teams. The total prize money is €12,000 per year.



Fig 1.1 Promotional content for the 2026 competition

Description

Whilst the core aims of the competition have remained the same, some adjustments are made each year. In the fourth edition¹ which took place during 2025, the aim was to raise the visibility of women in professional fields where their presence is less than 50% of the total workforce. Eligible sectors included: manufacturing and mechanics; installation and maintenance; energy and water; image and sound; and extractive industries. The number of cash prizes also increased from three to four. The baseline requirements remained



Fig 1.2 Promotional content for the competition's fourth edition

unchanged: all teams had to consist of at least 50% women or be led by female instructors.

All teams are invited to focus on a specific challenge that addresses an issue affecting their local environment, where women play a leading role. The challenge is announced to all participating teams in an online event scheduled on or close to International Women's Day. Each team then has three weeks to submit a video (up to three minutes long) presenting their technological solution to the challenge. All proposals must be linked to at least one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)² in addition to gender equality. Videos must be submitted with a full list of materials and resources required to implement the proposal.

In 2025, following evaluation by an independent committee, the four winning teams were announced on 30 May. Evaluation criteria include how the proposal addresses female under-representation (especially for women with a disability). Other criteria include an assessment of the proposed solution including: how effectively it has been planned; the required materials and resources; reproducibility and capacity to scale-up; and how it addresses one of the SDGs. The team's critical thinking, innovation, and teamwork is also evaluated.

The competition cycle is concluded with two training sessions offered by staff from the Esprinet Group to improve job training and employability, digital transition and technological transformation. Winning teams are awarded a cash prize at an event hosted at the Esprinet Group headquarters in Madrid. The first prize is €5,000, the second is €3,300 and the third and fourth prizes are €1,850 each. Prize money is distributed between the students, the teacher and the VET provider.

¹ For more information on the 2025 4th edition, see: [4th edition- premios-transferencia-de-conocimiento-de-la-fp](https://www.fpempresa.es/premios-transferencia-de-conocimiento-de-la-fp)

² For a full list of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals, see: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

The 2025 winning proposals:

First prize was awarded to a maritime VET school specialized in marine fishing (Centro Público Integrado de Formación Profesional Marítimo Zaporito) which has a 16% rate of female participation. Their project addressed the under-representation of women in the sector. The team proposed a software application to provide a networking hub for companies, training centres and professionals to reach out to women. To encourage women to feel safer working in the sector, they also developed a bracelet with wi-fi connectivity which contained a geolocator.

Second prize was awarded to the secondary VET institute (Instituto de educación secundaria) Miguel Herrero Pereda which focused on using technology to prevent women being sexually assaulted through being drugged. Their proposal was to create a small adhesive device which attaches to a mobile phone case and which contains colour indicator strips which detect chemical substances added to drinks.

The Third and Fourth prizes were awarded to the Canastell VET provider (Centro Público Integrado de Formación Profesional Canastell) and to the secondary VET institute (Instituto de educación secundaria) Francisco Tomás y Valiente respectively. Students from Canastell proposed a prototype of an electric microcar with a ramp to support women with disabilities to work. The fourth ranked team proposed more tech toys targeted at young girls to spark an interest in tech from an earlier age.

The video proposals can be viewed here: <https://fpempresanet/4a-edicion-premios-transferencia-de-conocimiento-de-la-fp/>

Objectives

The objective of the competition is to promote and make visible the contribution of women to occupations and professions where they are underrepresented. The aim is to challenge the idea that certain VET training courses are only for men and to encourage more women to think about entering tech professions and more generally to opt for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) subjects in their studies.

This competition places women front and centre in the competing teams and in the initiatives to be proposed.

Outcomes and impact

Since the 2022 launch of the competition, there have been 4 editions bringing together more than 1,200 participants, 166 proposals and €48,000 in cash prizes. Much of the competition outreach takes place on social media to gain the attention of young people. To date, the competition has accrued more than 170,000 views across social media platforms .



Fig 1.3 The 2025 winning teams at the Esprinet Group headquarters³

³ See: <https://efvet.org/fpempresanet-grupo-esprinet-present-the-awards-for-the-4th-edition-of-the-premios-transferencia-de-conocimiento-de-la-fp/>

Insights and challenges faced

Prioritising women in a competition which is focused on sectors where they are under-represented can be difficult insofar as it can be challenging to ensure teams have sufficient women participation. The eligibility criteria to participate have been reinforced in the award guidelines and rules of each edition to require at least 50% female participation.

Other challenges to be addressed annually are the timing of the competition and its organisation: students, their teachers and the VET and business calendars are continuously busy. The use of digital management and communication tools such as online registration tools, virtual mentoring sessions and online presentations has helped overcome the limits of geography and time constraints.

Constructing fair, consistent and high-quality evaluation teams is also difficult. Evaluators need to have sufficient expertise in the proposals presented and the way in which the team (and their members) have worked. A robust, standardised scoring rubric has been developed enabling a transparent adjudication process to support trust in the evaluation process.

Nonetheless the partnership structure of the competition between VET providers and a private business has boosted the connection between students and the labour market. The competition requires students to propose a solution to a real-world issue and to consider the realities of production and resourcing. It also gives an insight into the obstacles women might face in entering a male-dominated sector or occupation. All who partner and participate in this competition appreciate a new perspective on the issues facing women in the VET system and in the labour market. At the individual level, participating students' awareness of further opportunities in the world of work is heightened.

Conclusions and next steps

The VET Knowledge Transfer Awards for Women will continue to a fifth edition and beyond in 2026. FPEmpresa is building a larger cohort of participating VET providers and the Esprinet Group is committed to continuing to highlight the contribution of women in tech.

Learn more

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To learn more about FPEmpresa, see: <https://fpempresa.net/en/home-2/> and <https://fpempresa.net/premios-transferencia-de-conocimiento-de-la-fp/>

Discover other practices

The UNESCO-UNEVOC innovative and promising practices database presents successful projects tackling key themes in TVET, such as entrepreneurship, youth employment, the green transition, digitalization, private sector engagement and more.

Learn more on our website at:
<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/promisingpractices>

Questions or comments? Contact our team at:
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