



Action number: CA19130

VM grant title: Fintech: a new way for women's digital financial inclusion

VM grant start and end date: 28/02/2022 to 15/05/2023

Grantee name: Albulena Shala

1. Presentation of your VMG

Fintech: a new way for women's financial inclusion—is a project organized by members of the Women in Fintech Conference Committee, which is also represented by the University of Tirana, the University of Naples Federico II, the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Kadir Has University (Turkey), Babeş-Bolyai University (Romania), the University of Oradea (Romania), the University of Pavia (Italy), Poznań University of Economics and Business (Poland), and University College Dublin (Ireland).

The project went through several stages and was completed on June 15, 2023. In the first stage, the drafting of the questionnaire was done. In the second stage, data collection was done; in the third stage, re-processing of the data and preparation of some preliminary results were done for Women in Fintech III. In the last stage, the preliminary results were presented at the Women in Fintech III conference. They will also be processed further, and a paper will be prepared.

Also, another purpose of this grant was the allocation of part of the funds for the Best WI-FI 2023 Young Researcher Paper Contest, in which students from all over Europe had the opportunity to participate. A jury was formed there, and with hidden votes, they voted for first place. Rosa Fabbriatore and Lucio Palazzo (from Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II) won the Contest for the Best WI-FI 2023 Young Researcher Paper with the project entitled Multilevel IRT Models to Explore Heterogeneity in Subjective Financial Knowledge at Individual and Regional Levels: The Italian Case. (For more info: [https://fin-ai.eu/womeninfintech2023/.](https://fin-ai.eu/womeninfintech2023/))

This award includes a fast-tracked review and possible publication of the paper in Frontiers in Applied Mathematics and Statistics. Special Issue on Advanced Statistical Modeling for Fintech, financial inclusion and inequality (Guest Editors Maria Iannario, Branka Hadji Misheva, Jörg Robert Osterrieder, Claudia Tarantola), subject to prior agreement from the author or authors and being accepted by the editorial board of the journal.

Through this competition, we have encouraged all students (especially women) to participate in the conference, enabling them to create connections with other professors and continue further with the publication of their work.

The project is in line with the COST19130 Action objectives:

- The project brought the gap between academia and industry by working in research with real data and focusing on innovation
- Encouraging young scientists to conduct genuine and serious research on the main topics of the Action
- Make available to the scientific community, European institutions, and the general public the findings of the action activities
- Significantly improve gender equality in the fields of the Action
- Demystifying or explaining possible gaps (gender among them) by empirical data analysis

The project aims to encourage young people to participate in a competition in which:

- Students and young researchers in early stages of their career will have access to real data, and will produce their results, which will be evaluated by a professional jury, in order to evaluate the methodologies and output of their work
- To prepare a presentation, in an international context, with competitors from all over Europe.

2. Main results/outcomes obtained

The main results from this WMG are presented in Women in Fintech III. VGM was planned to improve the role and opportunities for women in the fintech industry. This enables the researchers to contribute to the goals of the Action more easily and without incurring travel costs. The results presented in Women in Fintech III provided information about the opportunities that fintech can bring to women:

- Increase the level of responsibility for different institutions.
- Enhance cross-border collaborations between universities,
- Enabling participation in the Women in Fintech III conference

Also, the project is in line with the COST19130 Action objectives:

- The project will bridge the gap between academia and industry by working on research with real data and focusing on challenges and opportunities for women in the fintech industry.
- Make available to the scientific community, European institutions, and the general public the findings of the action activities.

- Demystifying or explaining possible gaps (gender among them) by empirical data analysis

The increased role of women in the fintech industry.

Also, the presentations from students were at the same conferences. The jury evaluated:

- Style and creativity
- Clarity of the message
- Use of appropriate statistical methods
- References.

Relevant Appointments

- February 28, 2022: Kick off
- On June 2, 2023, there will be a presentation of the results of the project in Women in Fintech III and presentations of papers from students.
- The payment we did not finish yet

Thank you very much for this great opportunity! I am very happy that I will help students to continue with their work!

Please if you need other information let me know!

Albulena SHALA.