



**NETWORKING, DIALOGUE AND MENTORSHIP FOR  
WOMEN IN HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES**

**OPEN ADVISORY MEETING REPORT &  
2021 STRATEGIC PLAN**

## Welcome to Female Founders

---

Female Founders is designed to connect female-founded health and life science companies with LSX's network of investors and experienced life science professionals, provide the resources to help women raise more capital and facilitate knowledge-sharing between founders and industry veterans. Why are we here?

- To stimulate investment in female-founded health and life sciences companies in Europe, by connecting them with LSX's existing network of 10,000 investors
- To connect women with experienced health and life sciences industry professionals for mentoring, knowledge-exchange and networking
- To provide a network for women in European health and life sciences to share ideas, ask questions and make the connections needed to grow their business

# Benefits

---

## Mentor Program

Each new founder member is partnered with a Mentor who is an experienced health or life science business professional. Mentors are pre-selected by LSX and introduction is made within a month of signing up. Mentors are required to commit to four catch-ups with mentee in the first 12 months (arranged independently by mentor and mentee).

## Exclusive access to LSX's network of 10,000 health and life science VCs

For the past six years LSX has built up one of the most comprehensive networks of investors in health and life sciences in Europe. Female Founders members gain exclusive access to this network, via private networking events and digital outreach.

## Free member-only events

Free member-only networking events held regularly throughout the year. These include founder's roundtables, briefing sessions with high-profile women in health and life sciences and dedicated investor events. Whatever the format, there will be new ideas generated, new connections made and lots of laughs.

## 25% discount to LSX industry events

LSX runs a portfolio of best-in-class industry conferences and partnering events for health and life science professionals. Female Founders members receive a 25% discount on delegate tickets for all LSX events.

# Values

---

## Knowledge-exchange

We facilitate open, honest dialogue between women in health and life sciences to help grow female-led businesses, as well as to support individual career progression.

## Diversity and inclusion

We believe that diversity drives innovation. We welcome women from all cultures and backgrounds and encourage diverse points of view and experience to solve some of the world's biggest health challenges.

## Member-led

The needs of our members are integral to setting the strategic direction of the Female Founders network. We are committed to taking regular advice from our members as the network evolves and to hosting regular feedback sessions for members to contribute actively to that evolution.

## Serving unmet medical needs

Female-led businesses don't just solve "women's problems" but they certainly help. We are committed to driving investment into companies solving women's health challenges and serving unmet medical needs.



# Open Advisory Meeting – 19th Feb 2021



# Open Advisory Meeting – 19th Feb 2021

The first Female Founders Open Advisory Meeting was extraordinarily well attended, hosting 85 smart, passionate and motivated women with an additional 100 expressing their regret at not being able to attend. While the reception was hearting it also demonstrates the huge need for better support for women, particularly founders, in health and life sciences.

## Male mentors

After a brief ice-breaker and initial presentation of the plans for the network the session opened-up for feedback and questions. The discussion focussed on the mentor role. Attendees agreed that male mentors could offer valuable experience and wide networks to female founders, and that it would be beneficial to all for LSX to invite men to be mentors as well as women [see poll figures on following pages]. While there was wide support for the mentor backgrounds proposed by LSX, the group also felt that former or current founders of businesses would also make valuable mentors to early-stage entrepreneurs.

## Job Board

The concept of a job board was also raised. This led to to discussion about the challenge of sourcing experienced women for NED and executive roles, as well as lack of access to those roles in other health and life science companies for women. Based off the clear need it was decided to incorporate a job board into the network sooner than originally anticipated (perhaps as early as Summer 2021).

# Open Advisory Meeting – 19th Feb 2021

The large group was then broken into smaller breakout rooms of 4-5 people each and asked to brainstorm around four key questions:

1. What major challenges are you facing in your business that might be met by the network?
2. What other pieces of work would you like to see the network deliver? Eg. Investor benchmarking, “how to” guides or pitch deck advice
3. What topics would you like to see on the 2021 event calendar?
4. From what you have seen today, what is the network missing? What else would you like to see delivered?

From the responses, it was evident that the challenges that Female Founders are facing in this environment are vast and uncapped. Dealing with unconscious (and sometimes conscious) bias from investors; the struggle to be taken seriously and feeling that they lacked credibility; the drain of working in a male-dominated environment; through to more practical COVID-inspired challenges like digital customer engagement and pressure on resources. The concept of demonstrating credibility was particularly prevalent. The two challenges that came up again and again were fund raising and personnel, particularly building a diverse senior management team and board.

This reflected a high demand for the Female Founders job board, and the need to inject “fresh blood” into people’s existing business networks. There was also a suggestion that Female Founders benchmark itself on the number of female-led companies who raised funds successfully via the network.

# Open Advisory Meeting – 19th Feb 2021

## Challenge-specific events

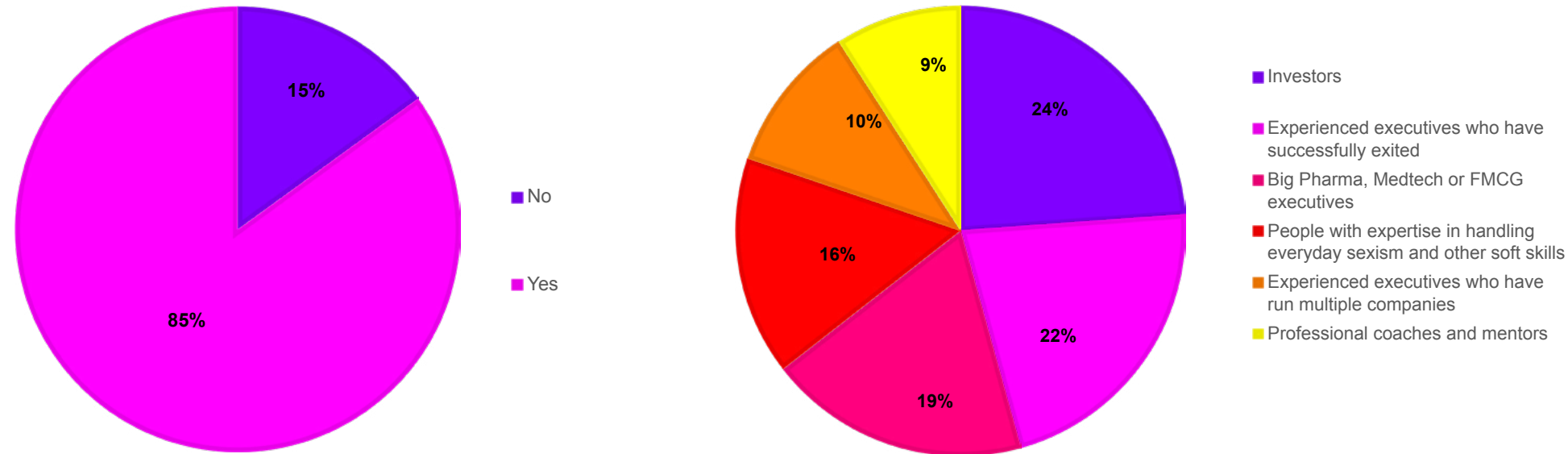
In terms of topics, the major theme was a desire to tackle one challenge at a time with sessions on specific needs or challenges. These ranged from guidance on creating better pitch decks; delivering credible pitches; negotiation skills; guidance on how to build a leadership team and diverse board with a focus on timing, skills and resources. Participants were also keen to gain a better understanding of financing and deal-dynamics, as well as to address commercialisation challenges at distinct point including spin-out and scale-up (or navigating the “second valley of death.”)

## Peer-to-peer support and collaboration

Finally, the desire for peer-support or peer-to-peer collaboration came through strongly. This had not been presented as an initial goal of the network but has now been incorporated into the 2021 Strategic Plan. There was also an interest in encouraging commercial collaboration between members and partnering with other women’s networks around the country or world. Last-but-not-least, it was suggested that the network could also play a role in educating men about the challenges faced by women – particularly founders – in health and life science. The network should serve to foster a deeper understanding of, and desire to improve, the experience of women in the health and life sciences community.

# Preferred Mentor Poll Results

Do you think the Female Founders network should engage male mentors, as well as female? Founders would be given the option to select a preference.



# Sample of mentor survey questions

Which types of companies do you feel most comfortable providing mentorship for, and at what stage in their journey?

- Pharmaceuticals
  - Drug discovery
  - Pre-clinical
  - Clinical trials
  - Filing and regulatory approval
- Biotech
  - Drug discovery
  - Pre-clinical
  - Clinical trials
  - Filing and regulatory approval
- Healthtech
  - Design and development
  - Clinical evaluation
  - Market access or adoption
  - Growth
- Medtech
  - Design and development
  - Clinical evaluation
  - Market access or adoption
  - Growth
- Consumer or FMCG
  - Product development
  - Brand development and early-stage marketing
  - Growth

Which strategic challenges do you feel you have the most to offer help with?

- Fundraising
- Executive team and board development
- Drug discovery and indication selection
- Product development
- Progressing through the clinic
- Regulatory approval
- Market access
- Product launch and channel strategies
- Branding and marketing
- Business resilience
- Deal making and external partnerships
- Strategic exit (IPO or M&A)
- Other (please specify)

Do you have any preferred disease areas to provide mentorship for?

- No
- Yes (please specify)

Do you have any preferred technology areas to provide mentorship for?

- No
- Yes (please specify)



# Preliminary Calendar of Events 2021

| January  | February  | March  | April   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  | Open Advisory Roundtable<br>Friday 19th February 11am BST                                       | Ask the Investors Roundtable<br>Tuesday 30th March 2pm BST                   | Webinar – Building a diverse leadership team and board<br>Friday 23rd April 11am BST                            |
| May  | June  | July   | August  |
| Member Clinic – IP<br>Friday 21st May 11am BST                 | Ask the Investors Roundtable<br>Tuesday 15th June 2pm BST                                       | Webinar – The anatomy of a deal<br>Friday 16th July 11am BST                 | Member Clinic – Pitching, Credibility and Negotiation<br>Tuesday 17th August 2pm BST<br><br>Possible live event |
| September  | October   | November   | December  |
| Ask the Investors Roundtable<br>Tuesday 21st September 2pm BST | Webinar – Closing the investment gap<br>Friday 22nd October 11am BST<br><br>Possible live event | Member Clinic – Deal Dynamics and Financing<br>Tuesday 23rd November 2pm BST | Ask the Investors Roundtable<br>Friday 3rd December 11am BST<br><br>Possible live event                         |

# Female Founders Member-Only Events

## Ask the Investors Roundtable (virtual)

A panel of investors will give a brief “reverse pitch” explaining how they operate and what they look for. The floor is then open for members to grill them on those questions you don’t get to ask before a regular pitch or meeting – like advice on pitch decks, how to convey credibility and how much science is too much?

## Member Clinics (virtual)

Tackling specific issues faced by founders and encouraging business collaboration between founders and other members. Trying to get to the bottom of a gnarly IP issue? Or understand deal dynamics? Or hone your pitch deck to perfection? There are a host of intelligent, business-savvy women in the network who can offer their support.

## Live Member-Only Events

With a focus on networking and open, honest dialogue, Female Founders live events will consist of a talk or panel from inspirational senior women followed by networking reception.

## Webinars

Webinars might address a specific challenges raised by members or cover the wider experience of women in health and life science. They are designed to promote members and partners to the wider LSX community, and to raise awareness about the experience of women as they found and grow their businesses.

# Female Founders events at LSX

When live large-scale live events return, Female Founders will host Investor Networking Receptions alongside LSX's conferences, connecting women with LSX's investor network. Female Founders members received 25% discount to all LSX conferences.



# Female Founders 2021 Timeline

## March 2021

- First mentors confirmed
- Memberships open
- 2021 event series kicks off
- Formal Advisory Board confirmed

## Summer 2021

- Introduction of membership portal including investor database and job board

## August 2021

- First live networking event (we hope!)

## September 2021

- Member Open Advisory Meeting (6-month review)

## February 2022

- Female Founders @ LSX World Congress – first live Investor Networking Function

# Introducing our first Industry Champion

The Female Founders network is being championed by inspirational women in health and life sciences, lending their support and expertise to bring more women up with them.

We are delighted to welcome our first Industry Champion, Annemijn Eschauzier.



*“Throughout my career I have seen the power of diversity in achieving the best solutions and the most progress in solving key unmet needs in healthcare. I’m passionate about supporting women in health and life sciences, to contribute to this diversity and make us stronger together.”*

**Annemijn Eschauzier**  
Chief Marketing Officer, Women’s Health  
GE Healthcare Imaging

# Membership in 2021

People who sign up in 2021 become founding members and receive a 50% discount that is carried over for two years. Members have two options, a Founders Membership or Standard Membership for non-founders.

## Founders

- Enrolment in Mentor Program
- Free monthly virtual events
- Free live member-only events
- Peer-to-peer support from women leading health and life sciences
- Access to exclusive investor networking functions
- Access to NED and executive leadership opportunities
- 25% discount to LSX conferences
- Member profiles included in monthly newsletter and social posts
- Library of resources (videos, articles, surveys and Q&A)

Investment = ~~£500~~ £250  
(50% discount for founding members in 2021)

## Standard

- Free monthly virtual events
- Free live member-only events
- Peer-to-peer support from women leading health and life sciences
- Access to exclusive investor networking functions
- Access to NED and executive leadership opportunities
- 25% discount to LSX conferences
- Member profiles included in monthly newsletter and social posts
- Library of resources (videos, articles, surveys and Q&A)

Investment = ~~£500~~ £250  
(50% discount for founding members in 2021)



# Become a partner

---

Is your business passionate about supporting gender diversity in health and life sciences? Then tell it to the world!

By sponsoring Female Founders you are helping to support female-led businesses in health and life sciences, as well as gaining exclusive access to some of the most innovative emerging companies in the space..

- Be seen as a thought-leader on gender diversity in health and life sciences
- Distribute digital content to the Female Founders network
- Co-host live and virtual Female Founders events
- Branding on the Female Founders website, digital and live events
- Group memberships for your clients and colleagues

For more information about the network please contact Angela Tyrrell at [angela@lsxleaders.com](mailto:angela@lsxleaders.com).



**Contact**  
**Angela Tyrrell**  
**[angela@lsxleaders.com](mailto:angela@lsxleaders.com)**