

Women's innovation, creativity take center stage on World Intellectual Property Day

The United Nations agency behind [World Intellectual Property Day](#) is calling for greater participation of women in the field of innovation and creativity to reap maximum benefits for society.

“At present, [humanity is not realizing its full innovative and creative potential](#),” said Francis Gurry, the Director-General of the UN World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

“I call on everyone, everywhere, to ensure that we each do everything in our power to increase the full participation of women in innovation and creativity.”

According to WIPO, the number of women taking up leadership and senior roles in science, technology, business and the arts has increased.

For instance, in 1995, only 17 percent of international patent applications filed under WIPO's Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) system included a woman among the inventors listed.

A deficit in the participation of women means that the current levels of innovation and creativity are suboptimal, said Mr. Gurry, adding “we are simply not reaping the full benefits that flow from innovation and creativity.”

Better use of the potential offered by the full breadth of the society – including women and men – will help humanity address the radical challenges it confronts such as climate change, clean energy, food security and health, stressed the WIPO chief.

Marked annually on 26 April, World Intellectual Property Day highlights the role of intellectual property rights, such as patents, trademarks, industrial designs, and copyright, in spurring innovation and creativity.

Established in 1967, WIPO is a [self-funding specialized UN agency](#) that works for the development of a balanced and effective international intellectual property system and to enable innovation and creativity for the benefit of all.

It currently has 191 member States and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.