

## **The Women Initiative Foundation (WIF) founded by Martine Liautaud opens an office in Singapore. It will be lead by Laurence Onfroy.**

**Paris, June 11th, 2019:** Set up in 2016 by serial entrepreneur Martine Liautaud after the success of the WBMI association set up in 2009, the Women Initiative Foundation (WIF) promotes women in the world of business and the economy in general. WIF supports women at all company levels, striving to break through the glass ceiling for both pay parity and equal opportunities. To this end, WIF has built a powerful mentoring program to support both women entrepreneurs and company executives in their careers. In parallel, WIF has designed and developed first-class executive programs in partnership with global academic institutions such as Stanford with BNP Paribas (for entrepreneurs), CentraleSupélec, Berkeley and McGill (for women executives), and SCRIPPS College (for millennials). Each year over 200 women benefit from these programs.

To support women in their international development, WIF has broadened its presence in Europe, in the United States (NYC & SF), in Canada, and now in Asia with an office in Singapore.

Laurence Onfroy, an active WIF member and founder of TemptingPlaces – recently sold to the global hotel chain, Louvre Hotels Group – will head up the office.

In Singapore, Laurence’s goal is to build a WIF circle with Singaporean, French and international partners, by holding regular events and setting up mentoring programmes for women entrepreneurs and women executives in global companies. With an academic institution, she will also create a new executive program for women leaders in Asia for 2020, and she will develop relations with donors in Asia.

*“I’m delighted that we are adding an office to our network in Asia, and especially in Singapore which is enjoying extraordinary growth. I have every confidence in Laurence Onfroy, who participated in both the mentoring program and the Stanford program in 2015, before helping to set up the European inter-company mentoring program. In a few years, the Women Initiative Foundation has managed to successfully realize its vision, combining philanthropy, innovation, and international development, as well as being demanding in the quality and the diversity of the women we promote in business. When women succeed, we all win!”*, declared Martine Liautaud, Founder and Chair of the Women Initiative Foundation.

*“Having benefited from the WIF program, I could see how much impact the Foundation has and how important it is for entrepreneurs to be supported – whether it’s in the growth, financing or international development phases, or whether it’s for building a solid network. Singapore is a gateway to Asia and its geostrategic position is unique for the Foundation’s outreach. I’m thrilled to be part of this ambitious global project, and to be able to actively enhance the promotion of women in Asia”,* added Laurence Onfroy.

## **Laurence Onfroy, Director, Asian Operations, WIF**



After graduating with a Master's in Marketing & Communications, Laurence worked and travelled around the world for several years. She began her career in 1998 as a consultant in marketing and communications for international luxury hotel brands. After heading up international marketing strategy for Robert Half International, and communications and public affairs for the online bank Egg Banking PLC (Prudential), Laurence co-founded 2 start-ups, in e-commerce and well-being. She launched TemptingPlaces in 2008, the first collection of outstanding boutique hotels in the world. Her pioneering brand in a growing global market met the expectations of a new generation of independent hotel owners.

Today the hotel chain has enlisted over a hundred hotels across 31 countries, a feat she accomplished with the support of the Women Initiative Foundation, the Stanford Women Entrepreneur Program and the mentoring program that has supported her since 2013. Laurence sold TemptingPlaces to Louvre Hotels Group in January 2019.

### **About Women Initiative Foundation (WIF):**

Founded in 2016, WIF brings together, organizes and leads a vast network made up of mentees, mentors, and strategic partners such as ENGIE and BNP Paribas in France and abroad (Europe, Canada, United States and in Singapore). WIF encourages the promotion of women in the world of business and the economy in general. WIF's mission is to become a think tank and to speak out in favour of gender diversity, and for the respect and recognition of women in business. It also develops international university programs for women entrepreneurs and women corporate executives.

Beyond its philanthropic sponsorship, WIF conducts research on these themes with Pan-European studies and specialized publications. Having successfully run a volunteer support program for women entrepreneurs of growing companies, in 2016 WIF launched a transatlantic program for both French entrepreneurs wishing to develop their business in the United States and Canada, with the support of an American or Canadian mentor – and American/ Canadian entrepreneurs wishing to set up in Europe, with the help of a European mentor.

In 2018, for high-potential women managers, WIF launched a European inter-company mentoring program with 5 global companies. An identical program will be launched in the USA in 2019. In June 2019 WIF is opening its first office in Asia, in Singapore.

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