

LACI

ANNUAL REPORT

# Women in **CLEANTECH**

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Building an Inclusive Green Economy



2025



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# Message From LACI Leaders



**MATT PETERSEN**  
President & CEO

Our mission at LACI is to create an inclusive green economy. While all of our programs support this mission, our Women in Cleantech (WICT) initiative is crucial to our effort to recruit diverse founders and workforce participants but also provides a vital network to support underrepresented leaders as they navigate everyday and systemic challenges throughout their professional journey. This year, I had the great privilege and pleasure to partake in our annual celebration of our WICT community and hear about some of their greatest accomplishments and what they aimed to achieve before the end of 2025. As we continue to look not only into 2026 but the years ahead, I'm excited for the WICT program to continue to recruit, uplift and highlight both the amazing work and unique perspective women in cleantech provide to the industry as a whole.



**ESTELLE REYES**  
SVP, Enhancing Community

For nearly a decade, I have had the pleasure of leading LACI's Women in Cleantech Programming under my role as LACI's Senior Vice President of Enhancing Communities. During that time, I have seen the network of women founders and leaders blossom into an ecosystem that is sharing and expanding its industry knowledge and expertise, empowering founders with new tools and resources, and charting a path for future entrepreneurs to play a role in solving today's pressing climate challenges. I am in awe of what the WICT Steering Committee has built and accomplished since 2016 and inspired by the dedication of its members as they continue to invest not only in themselves but also the growth, development and success of their peers. As we approach our 10th year, I am thrilled to support and guide our Women in Cleantech Steering Committee in their continued efforts to champion gender equity in the cleantech space.

# Introduction & Women in Cleantech Overview

The [Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator \(LACI\)](#) is a nonprofit organization established through a public-private partnership with the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. We create an inclusive green economy by unlocking innovation through working with startups to accelerate the commercialization of clean technologies; transforming markets through partnerships with policymakers, innovators and market leaders in transportation, energy and sustainable cities; and enhancing communities through workforce development, pilots and other programs.

Creating an inclusive green economy means ensuring that everyone can benefit from the green economy, either from green jobs, clean air, or accessing new zero emissions mobility or energy solutions. As part of our work in [Enhancing Communities](#), LACI created our Women in Cleantech (“WICT”) program to intentionally recruit and support more women founders in accelerating their cleantech solutions, sector expertise, and career growth.

LACI launched our Women in Cleantech Program to advance women founders, leaders, and workforce graduates with distinctive support and resources. Elements of the program include:

## 1 Workshop Series

Themed events that focus on broader topics such as:  
Access to Capital and Tackling Systemic Challenges.

## 2 Monthly Coffee Meetups

Monthly networking meetups focus on survey-identified painpoints  
(eg. Preparedness, Connection)

## 3 Special Events

Events that support recruitment, network building, and promote community member achievements (eg. Women's History Month Event, Fall Brunch)



“The Women in Cleantech group and programming has been such a great resource for my career and business development. From networking with a diverse group of women (and men) from a variety of industries and backgrounds, to learning more about crucial topics like financing, recruitment and growth strategy, WICT is, in my opinion, one of the most robust and beneficial professional groups to be a part of in Los Angeles.”

- Karri Ann, CEO and Co-Founder, CircularFashionLA

# 2025 Highlights

## Coffee Meetups

The Women in Cleantech Virtual Coffee Meetups provide women founders and leaders with **actionable resources to help their businesses thrive and provide a safe space to gather with a supportive community.**

Each session features a facilitator focused on a topic of interest, combining a presentation with guided workshopping and facilitated networking.



## Focus: Preparedness

### January 2025

Topic: How can we prepare for wildfires and focus on long-term climate resiliency? featuring LACI Incubation Alum Gilberto DeSalvo, CEO and Founder, Delphire and Pam Graham, former FBI Special Agent and LAFD Certified Fire Safety Consultant. During the meetup, attendees learned about individual wildfire preparedness (both at home and at work), and explored overall wildfire prevention measures.

### February 2025

Topic: How can we be best prepared to present ourselves during networking events? facilitated by Allison Taylor (EIR). Participants had the opportunity to learn about how to prepare for networking opportunities, present ourselves, and build meaningful connections.



**“WICT has helped me personally by remaining grounded in myself, and professionally, remembering that the relationships I foster is where wealth truly lies.”**

## Focus: Connection

### November 2025

Topic: Gratitude and Growth - Chat on Gratitude and Connection facilitated by Jessie Anora. Participants had the opportunity to reflect on what they're grateful for -- from the people who lift them up, to the moments that remind them they're supported and growing.

### December 2025

Topic: Knowledge-Gifting - Harnessing our Collective Wisdom facilitated by Valerie Williams - Attendees co-created a list of resources, tips, and hacks that made an impact on their lives in 2025.

# Women's History Month Celebration

## Women Shaping Cleantech

Weathering the Storm, Powering the Future



In celebration of [Women's History Month](#) in March 2025, [LACI's Women in Cleantech](#) partnered with [Women of Arc](#) to organize Women Shaping Cleantech: Weathering the Storm, Powering the Future in Torrance, CA — a night dedicated to connection and exploring how we can prepare ourselves and future generations for a stronger tomorrow.

The event featured a Keynote by [Tracy Quinn](#), CEO of Heal the Bay and included engaging Breakout Discussions around “Leading with Resilience,” “Storm-proofing” Your Career in Cleantech,” and “Pass the Power: The Value of Mentorship.”



**“WICT offered fellowship of like minded, professional and progressive women in fields other than my own. I was able to have interesting conversations and build new friendships with innovative and dynamic women, some who I now call my friends”**

# Tackling Systemic Challenges Series

In Q2, Women in Cleantech launched our 3-part Tackling Systemic Challenges Series to dive into the challenges women and other underrepresented groups face in navigating systems, learn about organizations that are leading the way, and discover how individuals and communities can make shifts within existing societal structures and systems themselves.

## **Event #1: Policies Advancing Gender Equity (27 attendees)**

Attendees learned how data, especially who defines it and how it's used, is important in understanding and addressing systemic issues like pay gaps and gender disparities. They also noted that policy reform is most successful through building coalitions with diverse stakeholders with both personal agency and community-building in mind.

## **Event #2: Workplace Equity and Inclusivity (41 attendees)**

Attendees emphasized that lasting workplace equity and inclusion requires accountable leadership, data-driven strategies, and ongoing support structures. Many noted the importance of holding leaders accountable for measurable DEI progress, building networks of support to sustain momentum and ensure inclusion is more than a one-time conversation.

## **Event #3: Access to Capital (37 attendees)**

Attendees acknowledged the importance of community support and gaining access to inspirational alternative paths to obtain capital (including small business resources highlighted by Rod Ponce from PNC Bank). Many left the event feeling motivated to start a business or revisit current models.





# Fall Brunch 2025

In October 2025, Women in Cleantech hosted our annual Fall Brunch celebrating women leaders in cleantech and sustainability. This year, we partnered with [Women of Arc](#) and [WRiSE \(Women of Renewable Industries and Sustainable Energy\)](#) as we expanded our community.

The WICT Fall Brunch took place on **Friday, October 3, 2025**, at [PLANTA Cocina](#) in Marina del Rey. We gathered for a brief program and networking activity before enjoying brunch, mocktails, and boat rides on Arc's all-electric boats!



What one word would you use to describe our WICT Fall Brunch?

exhilarating fantastic goddesses  
fabulous creative inviting radiance fascinating  
beautiful productive impressive extraordinary  
warm great incredible  
connection amazeballs energizing heart-warming  
reinvigorate  
effective engaging wonderful community  
empowering uplifting magical amazing lively  
networking impactful inspiring needed  
classy energetic fun power  
useful joyful soul

# High Tea + Book Club

In 2025, LACI also launched our first ever Book Club, featuring women authors writing about climate and sustainability topics. This year, we read the following books:

## **Under a White Sky: by Elizabeth Kolbert**

This book takes a hard look at the new world we are creating. Elizabeth Kolbert meets scientists who are trying to preserve the world's rarest fish, which lives in a single, tiny pool in the middle of the Mojave. She visits a lava field in Iceland, where engineers are turning carbon emissions to stone; an aquarium in Australia, where researchers are trying to develop "super coral" that can survive on a hotter globe; and a lab at Harvard, where physicists are contemplating shooting tiny diamonds into the stratosphere in order to reflect sunlight back to space and cool the earth. [...] By turns inspiring, terrifying, and darkly comic, *Under a White Sky* is an utterly original examination of the challenges we face.



## **Hospicing Modernity: Facing Humanity's Wrongs and the Implications for Social Activism by Vanessa Machado de Oliveira**

This book challenges the idea that the future can be "fixed" using the same modern systems that created our current global crises. Vanessa Machado de Oliveira—drawing on Indigenous, decolonial, and spiritual traditions—argues that modernity is in a terminal stage and must be "hospiced," not saved. That means learning to let go of destructive worldviews like individualism, human supremacy, and linear progress. She calls on activists to shift from trying to reform broken systems to fostering relational, grounded ways of being that can survive and regenerate after collapse. The book blends personal narrative, critical theory, and teachings from Indigenous elders, offering a transformative lens for those engaged in social and environmental justice work.



# Closing Remarks & Conclusion

As we reflect on this past year, we are filled with gratitude for the collective effort that has driven the Women in Cleantech community forward. This year we continued to strengthen our impact, expand our connections, and create opportunities that drive economic equity and growth.

- 1 The Women in Cleantech community grew to a total of **2,387 members** this year
- 2 Meaningful connections were successfully made throughout all WICT events
- 3 LACI's Fall Brunch received an outstanding **Net Promoter Score of 96** this year

These milestones highlight the power of collaboration and the dedication of our staff, partners, and community members. Together, we're building a more inclusive and resilient green economy.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our programs throughout the year, including our Women's History Month Celebration, Tackling Systemic Challenges Series, Coffee Meetups, Book Club, and the Fall Brunch. The progress we've made this year sets a strong foundation for continued impact in the years to come.

**56**

Unique attendees to our thematic 3-part Summer series programming

**23**

Total program hours delivered

**19**

Expert speakers with diverse experiences and backgrounds for our programming

**98%**

Reported that they would recommend WICT to a friend or colleague

**100%**

Of our guests made a new connection at the Women in Cleantech Brunch

**5**

Partnership collaborations for events



"WICT helped me expand my network with inspiring leaders and peers, and it provided tools that I've been able to apply to foster inclusivity and innovation in my work. The events were a powerful reminder of the collective strength of women supporting women."

# Supporting Partners

We extend our sincere appreciation to our **generous sponsors** for their invaluable support of LACI's Women in Cleantech initiative. Your commitment to advancing gender equity and empowering women in the clean technology sector plays a vital role in driving innovation and meaningful climate solutions. We are **grateful for your partnership and dedication** to fostering a more inclusive and sustainable future.



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