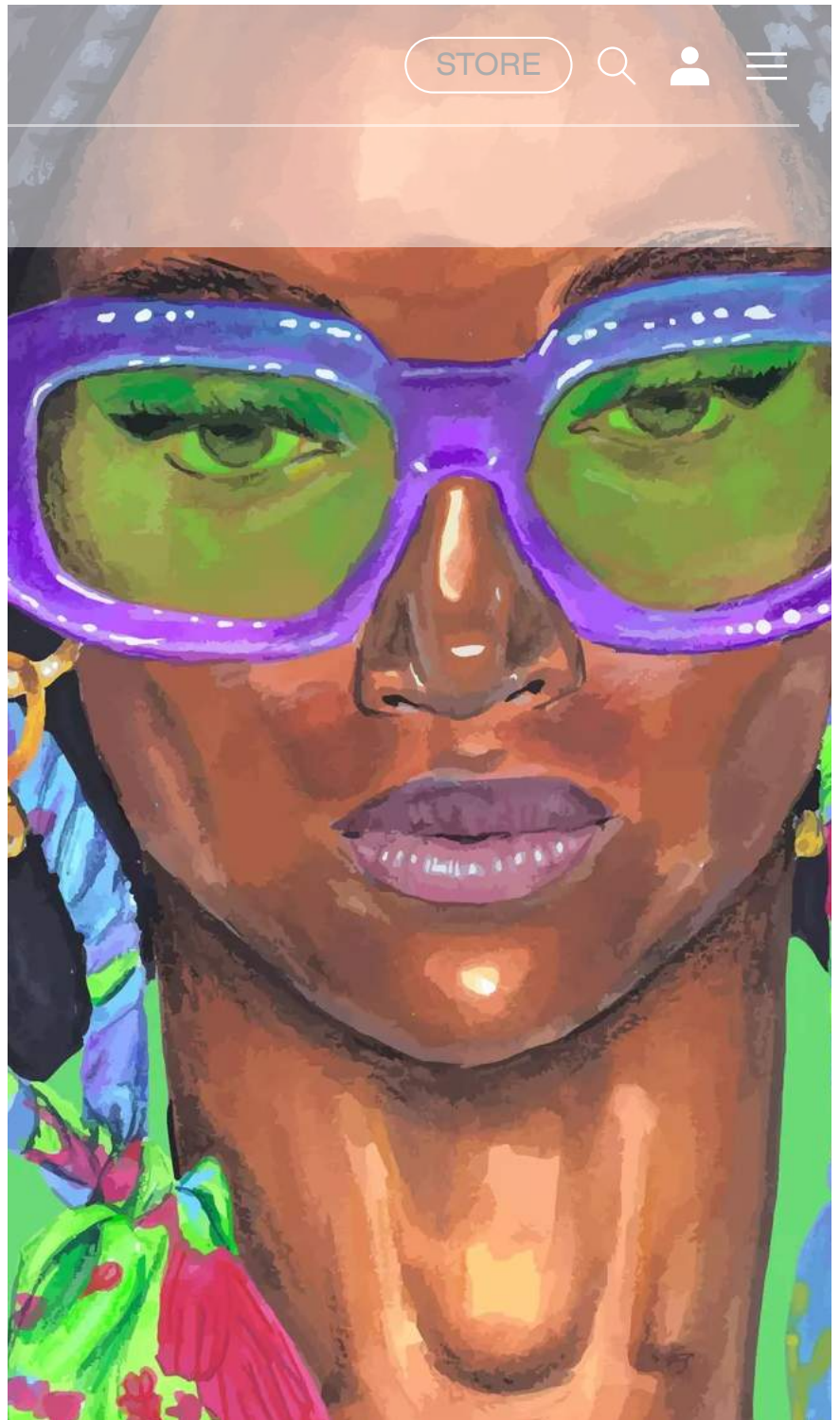





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EXCLUSIVE

8 Scandinavian women in tech you should know

By Yvonne Dewerne
May 10, 2022



From music streaming to drones, these are the Scandinavian women making huge waves in technology   

Few other regions in the world are more gender-equal than the Nordics. Yet women are still underrepresented in one of the most important fields of our age: technology. Thankfully, there are some fantastic role models for

any woman from the region hoping to redress that balance. Here, we shine a spotlight on the female tech trailblazers you should have on your radar.

1

Babou Olengha-Aaby, founder and CEO, The Next Billion – Norway

Too many wonderful ideas don't come to fruition because they lack funding. That's the issue that Babou Olengha-Aaby, who was born in Congo, grew up in London and now lives in Oslo, and her company The Next Billion hope to address. An impact-driven crowdfunding platform founded in 2014, her company invests in women's economic potential through entrepreneurship by providing access to finance and markets as well inspirational role models.



Babou Olengha-aaby.

2

Cecilia Qvist, head of Lego Ventures - Sweden

Cecilia Qvist has an impressive track record as a consultant to fast-growing technology companies. Until a few weeks ago she was the global head of markets at Spotify, where she led the expansion into more than 18 new countries. In 2019 she was named “The Most Impactful Director” by Swedish business magazine *Veckans Affärer*. Moreover, she proved to be instrumental in the audio streaming platform's growth. Now she has joined Lego Ventures as their new head to supercharge education and shape the future of playful learning. Additionally, she holds board seats at Kinnevik; a technology venture investor, Trustly; and Cint, a software firm in digital insights gathering.

Related: Melinda French Gates on how gender inequality is at the root of societal issues

3

Isabelle Ringnes, co-founder, Equalitycheck.it – Norway

A workplace should always feel safe. Unfortunately, that’s not always the case and speaking up can sometimes cost you your job. Changing this scenario is what led Isabelle Ringnes to co-found Equality Check.it, a technology product that measures diversity and inclusion in organisations through transparency and data collection. The company then supports

organisations with evidence-based solutions to deal with the gaps identified. The site is just one of a number of initiatives from Ringnes, who has spent much of her career aiming to inspire girls to lean in and contribute to shaping our world's future with technology.

Ringnes, has been appointed one of only six Norwegians in “100 Most Influential People in Nordic Tech” list. Before she co-founded Equalitycheck.it in 2019, she established tech-camps for young girls and spoke to thousands more around Norway to inspire them to choose technology.



Isabelle Ringnes. Photo: Kristoffer Myhre

4

Freyja Thorarinsdottir, founder and CEO, GEMMAQ – Iceland

Freyja Thorarinsdottir is on a mission to empower women through capital. With GEMMAQ, which was founded in 2015, the Columbia University graduate, created a system that rates companies based on how gender diverse their company leadership (executives and directors) is and designed the methodology and visualisations behind the rating system. Before GEMMAQ, she built a career in financial services and was a director and team leader at the Central Bank of Iceland.

5

Helena Samsioe, founder and CEO, GLOBHE – Sweden

Helena Samsioe is known as the Drone Queen for founding GLOBHE, Sweden's global drone service provider, in 2015. A former Swedbank employee, Samsioe also worked at the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs before launching GLOBHE's patent pending identifAI service, which helps the United Nations and other humanitarian actors better manage and identify natural disasters. She has won a SKAPA award, one of Sweden's biggest innovation prizes and created in memory of Alfred Nobel, for affecting positive change.

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Helena Samsioe. Photo: Tobias Björkgren

6

Mette Lykke, CEO, Too Good to Go – Denmark

Getting food waste under control is one of the biggest things we all can do to help our planet. Mette Lykke is at the forefront of a movement determined to put an end to throwing out good food. Her anti-food waste company Too Good To Go was founded in 2017 and she now leads more than 300 employees. Through the app, users are connected with unsold food from a variety of shops and restaurants all over Europe. The app has more than 12 million users and the service is available in 11 countries.

Mette took the position of CEO at Too Good to Go in 2017. But the 41-year-old Dane from Ringkøbing has been around the tech world since 2007, when she co-founded the fitness app Endomondo. Her hard work paid off – literally. She sold the app for a rumoured 85 million dollars. Now she has set her sights on the US markets, where more than 40 percent of produced foods end up in the garbage.



Mette Lykke. Photo: Ingrid_Lunden

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7

Juliana Araujo, founder and CEO, Beela –

Sweden

If women are still underrepresented in tech, the outlook for immigrant women and non-binary people might be even bleaker. Juliana Araujo and Beela are here to help. Araujo, a Latina immigrant herself, created Beela to help define a career path for people and help them meet their learning goals. Through talks and mentoring programmes, people can realise their potential and hopefully contribute to creating a better future for all of us.

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8

Tarnjit Saini, CEO and co-founder, StepOut – Finland

Born in India and raised in Finland, Tarnjit Saini is determined to make sure other Indian freelancers in the field of fitness, wellness and recreation won't have to jump through the same hoops she had to when she first tried to get her foot in the door as a trainer. StepOut, which she founded in 2019 together with Sanni Ishfaq, is building an all-in-one and user-friendly tool to assist fitness freelancers in streamlining their business processes just like a smart manager.



Tarnjit Saini.

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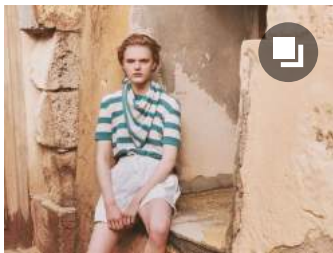
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