**Nomination Example Emma Smith**

**Leadership**

Emma is a senior executive with 20+ years of leadership experience across media, finance, technology, and consumer goods sectors in both New Zealand and Australia. Her cross-industry expertise enables her to drive innovation, foster capability, and lead businesses through transformation.

As **CEO of Future Living Aotearoa**, Emma has led a dramatic turnaround of the organisation over the past five years. Taking over a legacy business facing stagnation, she spearheaded a full-scale digital transformation, implemented a modern tech stack, introduced robotic automation, and redefined the customer experience. Under her leadership, the team has grown from 20 to nearly 70, and the business is now in a significantly stronger commercial position.

Previously, Emma was General Manager of Digital Strategy at **MediaWorks Pacific**, where she led several high-performing digital businesses and launched new platforms in the classifieds and recruitment space. She was instrumental in driving digital capability across the business and regularly contributed to strategic planning alongside the executive leadership team.

Earlier in her career, Emma held a regional role in Australia, consulting on standards-based innovation in the retail and e-commerce sectors—including projects adopted by global clients across 130 countries. This work was recognised with several industry awards and remains a personal career highlight.

Emma is also a graduate of Harvard Business School’s Advanced Management Program. Her team’s capstone project—a sustainable social enterprise to eliminate toxic mercury use in artisanal mining—was selected as the program’s top concept by a Gates Foundation representative and is now being piloted in Latin America.

**Influence**

Emma’s leadership style is deeply people-focused. She has a long-standing commitment to developing talent and supporting others in their career growth, from mentoring emerging leaders to coaching past team members across multiple industries.

She regularly speaks at leadership and industry events, particularly on themes around digital transformation, inclusive leadership, and gender equity. Forums she has contributed to include Women in Tech Aotearoa, National Real Estate Leadership Panels, and Business NZ’s Digital Innovation Summit.

Emma has brought global thinking back to New Zealand, consistently advocating for resourceful, idea-led growth. Her approach to innovation is inclusive—ensuring all voices are heard and barriers to entry are minimised. She is currently supported by her Board to pursue governance opportunities and is an active member of the Institute of Directors.

**Impact**

Emma is one of few women leaders in the property technology sector, and often the only woman in industry-specific spaces. She uses that platform to elevate other women, particularly in technical and leadership roles. When she joined Future Living Aotearoa, there were no women in the engineering team—now, women make up 40% of that team, with several in leadership roles.

She is also a vocal advocate for pay equity and has directly addressed disparities within her organisation, ensuring women are compensated and promoted equitably. Her leadership has resulted in a significant cultural shift, with an 88% employee engagement score and widespread support for inclusive workplace practices.

Emma has championed ethnic diversity across her business, intentionally building a multicultural team that now represents 14 nationalities. She celebrates this diversity with regular all-team events that centre different cultural traditions—fostering unity, understanding, and innovation. Her efforts are regularly shared with her professional community via LinkedIn, helping shape a wider conversation on inclusive leadership.

**Additional Information**

Emma brings extensive trans-Tasman experience and a strong network, and is driven to give back. After a decade focused on business growth and transformation, she’s now seeking to connect with like-minded leaders through Global Women.

She is particularly interested in contributing to initiatives that uplift women in technology and innovation. Joining Global Women would offer her a platform to both continue learning and support the next generation of wāhine leaders across Aotearoa.