

women-powered coffee summit 2023



event report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Women-Powered Coffee Summit, held on November 2-3, 2023, at Hacienda Doka, Alajuela, Costa Rica, **aimed to provide a safe and inclusive space for women in the coffee industry.** The event, **attended by 182 individuals, primarily smallholder women coffee farmers (57%),** received positive feedback with a Net Promoter Score of 90. Moreover, 97.17% of participants reported gaining valuable learning experiences at the Summit while 650+ new relationships have been forged.

Noteworthy moments of this year's Summit shared by the attendees included keynote speeches from Leonor Guitierrez from Root Capital, Karla Ly Quiñones representing Aula Escuela de Cafe, Cafe Comunion and Fair Trade USA, a Next Gen Panel with Damna Reyes Hernandez of Kitos Coffee, Dalila Porras of Alto el Vapor and Alejandra Diaz of Cotuza Coffee and practical guides on negotiations and personal branding. Attendees appreciated the thoughtful programs, logistics, and international networking opportunities.

We were honored to create the space where women and gender-diverse individuals could come together to forge meaningful relationships and build a stronger ecosystem of actors for a more thriving future of the industry.

Women Powered Coffee Summit (WPCS)

Date: November 2-4, 2023

Venue: Hacienda Doka,
Alajuela, Costa Rica



EVENT OBJECTIVES

Safe and Inclusive Space:

The summit aims to connect women from various sectors of the coffee industry, including producers, traders, roasters, baristas, and researchers, and provide a safe environment for them to gather and foster connections.

Women as Protagonists:

The summit seeks to create a space and platform for women to be the protagonists of their own stories, recognizing their knowledge and experiences that are often ignored or unheard.

Success and Sustainability:

By showcasing successful women in the coffee industry and emphasizing the importance of climate considerations and intersectionality, the summit aims to unlock potential and create opportunities for women to build thriving businesses.



EVENT OVERVIEW

DAY 0 (PRE-WPCS DINNER)

For those arriving early, we organized a pre-WPCS dinner in Alajuela, Costa Rica, to provide an opportunity for participants to connect, share stories, and build relationships.

We utilized our Huddle cards with conversation-provoking questions about gender, nature, and coffee to encourage sharing among attendees. **We were pleased to welcome over 60 participants to this gathering.**

DAY 1

The inaugural day set the stage for an inspiring journey with impactful keynotes and insightful discussions. Speakers such as **Leonor Gutierrez** (Root Capital), **Noel Arrieta Espinoza** (San Francisco Bay Coffee), and **Yimara Agudelo** (Coffee Quality Initiative) delved into the challenges and potential of the coffee industry.

The Next Gen Panel, moderated by **Natalia Villalobos** (Yara) showcased the innovation of the new generation with **Dalila Porras** (Alto el Vapor) from Costa Rica, **Damna Reyes** (Kitos Cafe) from Mexico, and **Alejandra Diaz** (Cafe La Cotuza) from El Salvador, and **Giselle Barrera** (Latinas in Coffee) offered a practical guide to successful negotiations for coffee farms.

A notable highlight was **Itzel Mendoza**, Program Manager of Bean Voyage, Mexico, sharing inspiration from Mexico through "Las Flores del Cafetal: The Flowers of Coffee Farm."



EVENT OVERVIEW

DAY 2

Kat Melhiem (Roaster Kat & Coffee People Zine) opened the second day by providing a trajectory of the specialty coffee industry from the perspective of a specialty roaster in the US. Navigating the realm of specialty coffee, the Roaster Roundtable with **Abigail Graupner (Chica Bean)** and **Laurel Carmichael (Vote Coffee)** was moderated by **Fabiola Solano (Soy Barista)** and it explored alternative business models.

The Sip, Savor, Share session emphasized finding value beyond the cup score with **Amaris Gutierrez (Women in Coffee Project)**, **Stephanie Welter-Krause (Swelter Coffee)**, and **Giselle Barrera (Latinas in Coffee)** representing the Team Women In Coffee Exchange (TWICE).

Yerlin Vargas Solano (The Coffee Institute of Costa Rica) shed light on technology as a powerful ally against climate change, and **Ivannia Alvarado** shared insights on strengthening personal brands through storytelling and social media. The summit concluded with **Karla Ly Quiñones García (Fair Trade USA, Aula Escuela de Cafe & Cafe Comunion)** offering inspirational stories, practical tips, and ideas for building a coffee career as a Latina.

DAY 3

(OPTIONAL FARM VISIT)

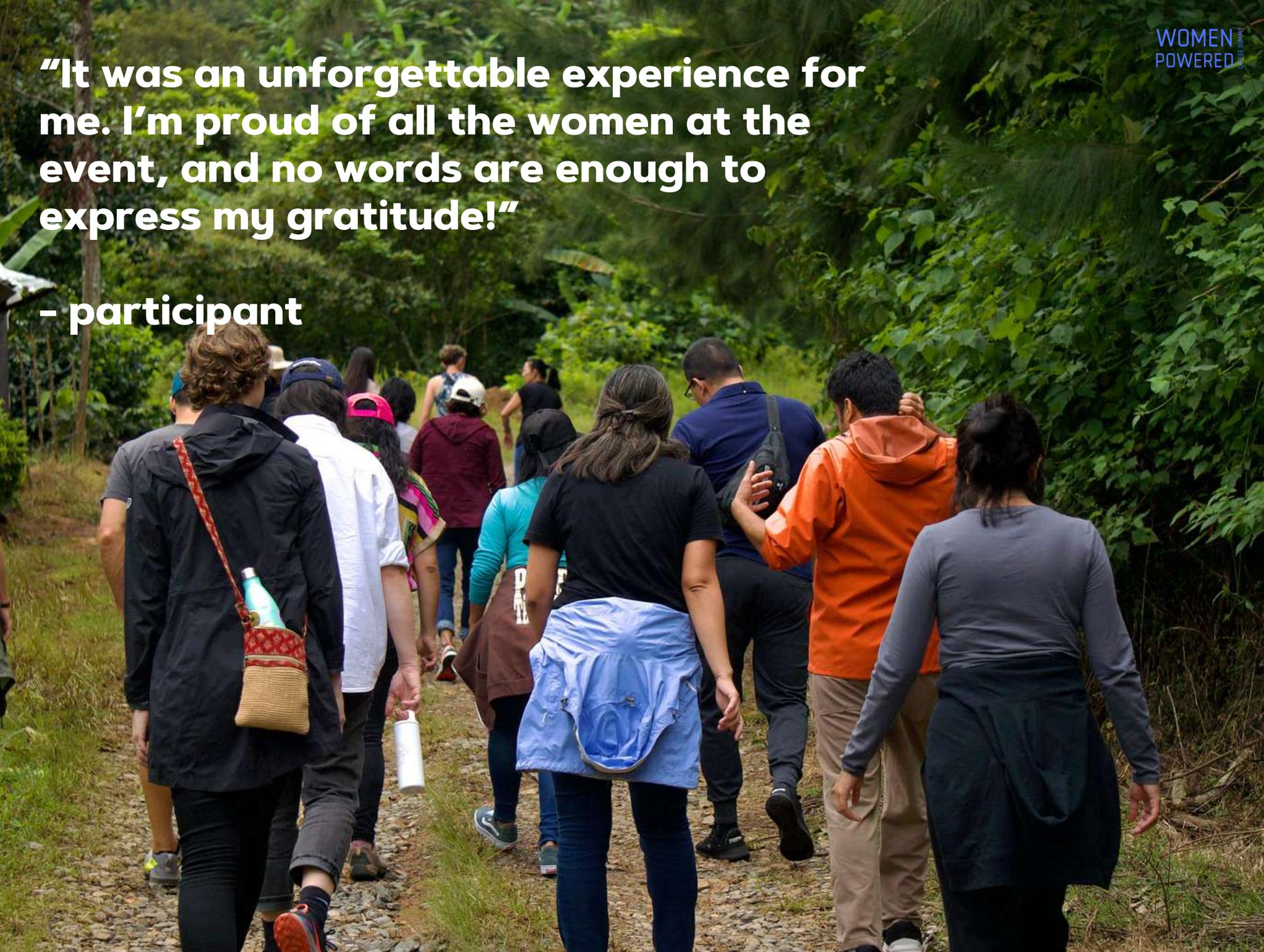
On the optional third day of the Women-Powered Coffee Summit, we visited two farms led by **Rosa Aura Navarro (Amalieth Coffee)** and **Tatiana Vargas (Legados Cafe)**.

The trip, joined by 21 participants, including roasters, coffee researchers, and producers from Mexico and Colombia, facilitated the exchange of knowledge between producers from different countries. Notable highlights included the fascination of Colombian and Mexican producers with Costa Rica's weight/volume measurement system, a focus on storytelling and connection through shared meals and coffee, and the identified need to incorporate such farm visits in future summit planning. **We look forward to making farm visits a regular part of our future events.**



“It was an unforgettable experience for me. I’m proud of all the women at the event, and no words are enough to express my gratitude!”

- participant



WPCS IN NUMBERS

182

PEOPLE ATTENDED

650+

MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS MADE

90

NET PROMOTER SCORE

how likely are you to recommend attending the WPCSt to another colleague?



94.85%

PARTICIPANTS REPORTING THAT
**THE PROGRAM WAS WELL
STRUCTURED**



97.17%

PARTICIPANTS REPORTING
**LEARNING INSIGHTFUL
INFORMATION** THROUGH
PARTICIPATING IN THE SUMMIT:

From hosting the inaugural WPCS in 2022 for 130+ participants, we expanded the event to 182 participants of which 57% were smallholder women coffee producers on full scholarship, **most of whom reported attending such an industry event for the first time.**

TOPICS THAT PARTICIPANTS FOUND HELPFUL

diversity & cultural representation

Appreciation for culturally diverse presenters from Mexico, El Salvador, Colombia, Guatemala and Costa Rica, fostering a sense of identification

empowerment & inspiration

Participants feeling motivated and empowered by the stories and experiences shared through presentations and audiences' involvement in the session

business development

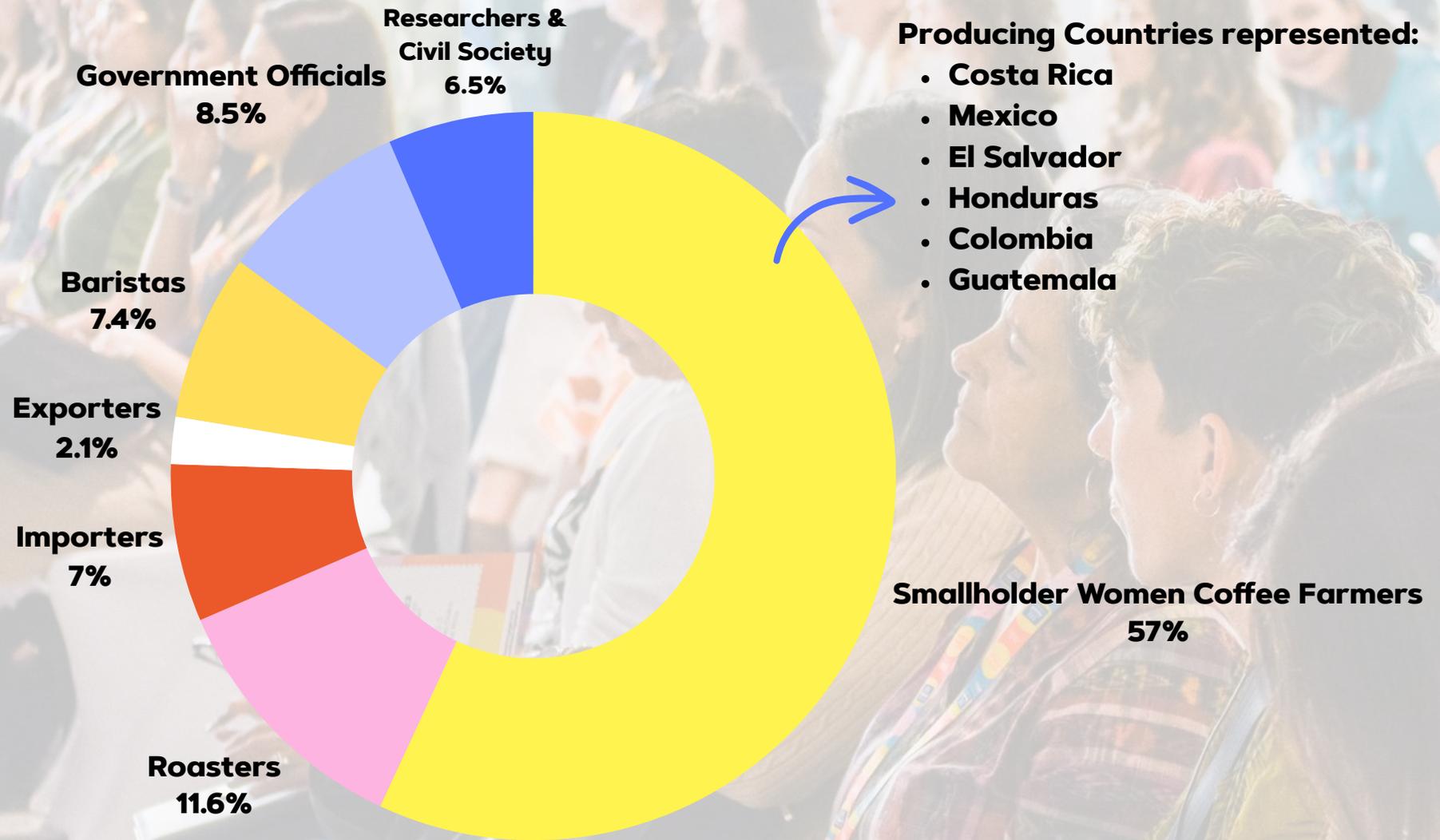
Positive remarks on practical sessions related to personal branding, business plans, and creating a brand

roasting, tasting & processing

Sessions on roasting, processing and coffee tasting being highlighted for their interactive and informative nature



DEMOGRAPHICS



PAST PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

WITH BEGINNINGS AT WPCS 2022

TWICE

After they met at WPCS 2022, Team Women In Coffee Exchange (TWICE) was started by Amaris Gutierrez-Ray ([Women in Coffee Project & Joe Coffee](#)), Stephanie Welter-Krause ([Swelter Coffee](#)), and Giselle Barrera ([Latinas In Coffee](#)) to promote gender equity in traditionally male-dominated quality control segment in the coffee industry.

Fabiola Solano

Founder of Soy Barista and [Authorized SCA Trainer](#), Fabiola shared that her decision to pursue a career in roasting and teaching roasting to other LATAM coffee professionals was ignited after the Roaster Roundtable panel she moderated at last year's WPCS. She became the first woman to be certified as an SCA Roasting Professional in Costa Rica.

ASOMIC

The Association of Women Entrepreneurs from Tarrazu, Costa Rica, representing 20+ micro-mills led by women coffee producers was born out of a conversation on the bus ride back from WPCS 2022 to share resources, knowledge, and insights to uplift one another in the coffee industry.

Noteworthy business relationships

After WPCS 2022, Stephanie Welter-Krause ([Swelter Coffee](#)) started sourcing coffees from Seilyn Jimenz ([Abuelos Cafe](#)), and Mayra Solis ([Alto el Vapor](#)) to create her [Magnolia's Blend](#), named after her daughter in celebration of the two women and their families' incredible work. This is one example of many sourcing relationships born out of WPCS.

You can click the titles to visit their websites



"It was very beautiful; I made many friends, and felt connected to the wider industry through stories shared at the Summit. I'm ready to bloom.

Thank you, Bean Voyage."

- participant



OUR LEARNING

Equity and inclusion is ingrained in our DNA, as we've been facilitating and moderating these spaces since our founding in 2016. Nevertheless, there's always room for improvement as we strive to diversify the participating audiences. Below, we share the insights (wins and challenges) gained from hosting the second Women Powered Coffee Summit, with the hope that it can help us celebrate successes, and make improvements for future initiatives!

Wins:

On Program

- **Curation of the programs:** We heard praise for the well-organized and engaging program that was relevant and resonating with many in the audience.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Appreciation for the chance to connect with other industry professionals. Networking was highlighted as a valuable aspect of the summit.

On Empowerment and Learning

- **Learning Opportunities:** Participants felt empowered and valued the learning experiences. The summit was seen as an opportunity for personal and professional growth.
- **Inclusivity and Safe Space:** Acknowledgment of the inclusive and safe space provided for women in the coffee industry.
- **Ongoing Support:** Participants expressed gratitude for the ongoing support and opportunities provided by the summit.

On Diversity

- **International Representation:** Recognition of the opportunity to meet and learn from international participants, not only from the 'traditional consuming' countries but from other Latin American countries and coffee-producing communities.
- **Diverse Voices:** Positive response to spaces that allowed the voices of female and gender-diverse coffee professionals to be heard. The opportunity to share experiences and stories was appreciated.

On Logistics

Commendation for the well-coordinated logistics, including **transportation, accommodation, and overall organization.** Volunteers' dedication and passion were also noted.

On Technology

The use of **advanced** technology, including **live translation,** contributes to the overall positive experience for participants from all walks of life.



OUR LEARNING Contd.

Challenges: On Program

- **Time Constraints:** Participants felt some activities were rushed, desiring more time for specific sessions and deeper discussions.
- **Diverse Locations:** Suggestions to host events in different countries for inclusivity.
- **Diverse Topics:** Requests for a broader range of topics, including coffee commercialization and sales.
- **Inclusion of Indigenous Voices:** Recommendations for more Indigenous perspectives in the program.
- **Program Duration:** Participants suggested reducing formal programming to make space for more networking and connection.

On Technology

- **Visibility Issues:** Concerns about lighting, especially with light colors making it hard to see content on the stage.
- **Internet Accessibility:** Requests for venues to have reliable internet access for connectivity.
- **Translation Services:** Suggestions to improve style, prepare key terms in advance, and ensure engaging delivery.
- **Accessibility of Information:** Requests for a written or digital summary of professional topics for reference.

On Logistics

- **Communication of Event Details:** Feedback on improving communication, especially for transportation instructions.
- **Improvement in Breakfast Services:** Suggestions to enhance breakfast services at lodging venues.
- **Transportation Management:** Participants expressed confusion about transportation instructions and suggested clearer guidelines.
- **Visual Communication:** Recommendations for improvements, including durable name tags and clear networking zones.

On Social Activities

- **Capacity and Socialization:** Suggestions to increase capacity and improve socialization opportunities due to a large number of attendees.
- **Consideration of Local Cafes:** Suggestions to include local cafes in the program for networking and promoting local coffee businesses.

On Venue

- **The limitation with private networking area/breakroom:** due to the venue having clear glass doors around the stage, it was limiting for participants to take a break while minimizing distractions for the presenter on stage.





"I loved hearing so many stories of women overcoming challenges and succeeding, and I hope these events continue to grow so that women who still feel overwhelmed by the fears and economic limitations can take a step forward and see what they are really capable of"

- participant

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Administrative Expenses
9.96%

Financial Scholarship
22.32%

for producers covering flight,
local/intl transportation, housing
and meals

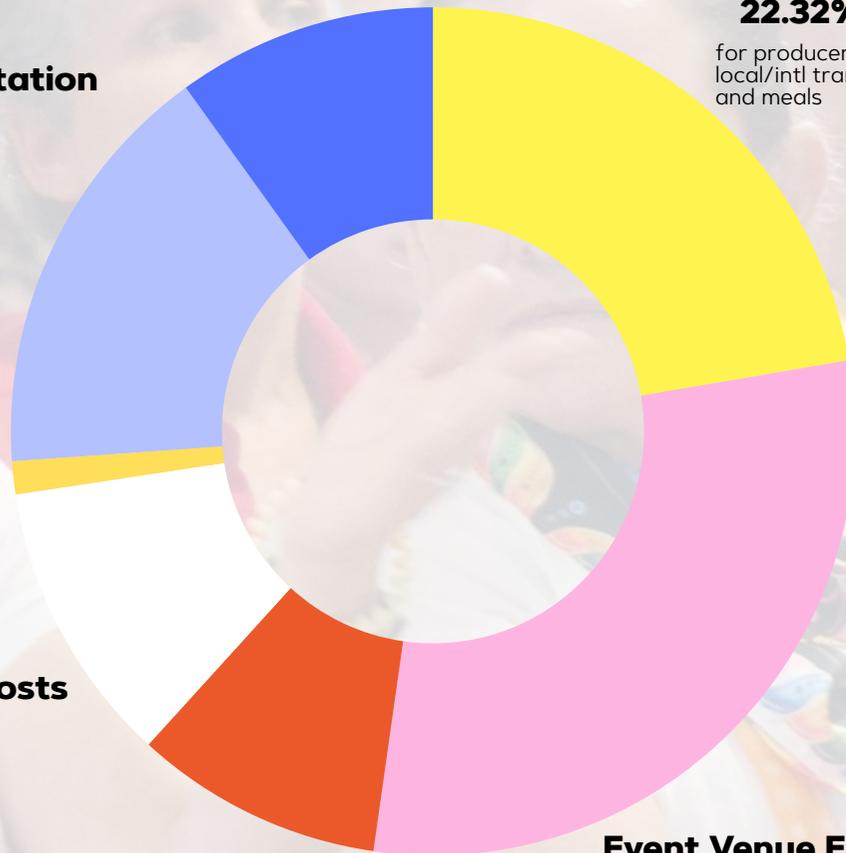
Speaker Honorarium and Transportation
16.17%

Audio-visual Assistance
1.26%

Social Event Costs
10.85%

Materials and Resources
9.52%

Event Venue Expenses and Meals
29.95%



Sponsors

thank you for making WPCS accessible to so many people!



Program partners

thank you for enriching the WPCS program!



FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

We are bringing the Women-Powered Coffee Summit as a flagship event to continue building a platform for smallholder women coffee farmers to connect with peers in the coffee industry, and build more thriving businesses.



SAVE THE DATE!

October / November, 2024
Location: Mexico

STAFF

Building the Thriving Coffee Industry Together.



www.beanvoyage.org/wpcs



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[womenpoweredcoffeesummit](https://www.instagram.com/womenpoweredcoffeesummit)

Photos: Alexa Romano and Hugo Antonio Tress Romero

COFFEE SUMMIT
WOMEN
POWERED



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Miir
Design forward.
Generosity driven.
Thanks for technology
2019 gold award winner