



# **Interview - Toponomastica Femminile WP 2**

Activity 1 (Leaders Interview)

Developed by Upwell | November, 2025

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## Interview Metadata

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Date of Interview:	11.07.2025
Interviewer Name:	Marco De Cave
Consent for data collection	yes
Additional remarks on the interview	

## Meet the leader

Name:	Maria Pia Ercolini
Age:	60
Gender:	F
Current role and position:	President
Years of Work Experience:	+35
Years in Leadership Roles:	+10
Organization:	Toponomastica Femminile
Sector of Activity:	Gender equity and training of public administrations (mostly)
Country / City:	Italy, Rome
Organization Size:	<input type="checkbox"/> Micro <input type="checkbox"/> Small <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Large

## Main Interview Content

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Interview Section	Summary of Answers	Selected Quotes
The Path to Leadership Key moments, challenges, values	Started working on gender issues, joined <i>Toponomastica Femminile</i> in 2012. Key challenges included pandemic adaptation and scaling the association. Values: visibility, collective effort, long-term growth.	<i>“Starting from toponymy, where only 3–5% of public street namings honoured women, it has been a journey of growth, marked by commitment but also by great satisfaction in gender education.”</i> <i>“One major challenge was the pandemic, which forced us to completely rethink our activities.”</i>
Your Approach to Leading Inclusion, decision-making, vision	Practices active listening, encourages participation, delegates responsibly. Seeks to create environments where everyone can contribute and grow. Integrates informal dialogue and consultation. Vision: shared purpose, collective impact.	<i>“Before making an important decision, I always ask for opinions, even by email. I believe everyone has something valuable to contribute.”</i>  <i>“Informal discussions are key to build a climate of trust.”</i>
Driving Change Strategies for sustainable and positive outcomes	Promotes collaboration and shared responsibility through delegation and trust. Focuses on sustainable partnerships, long-term engagement, and generational continuity. Projects designed to reach broader audiences via online tools and social media.	<i>“Fourteen years ago, Toponomastica Femminile was just a name of an association; today it has become a common reference for public administrations and non-profits”</i> <i>“A concrete example is the attention we give to training new board members and working group participants, ensuring generational turnover and continuity of our activities over time.”</i>
Bias & Belonging Tools, practices, awareness	Raises awareness and reduces prejudice through research, publications, events, and inclusive language. Engages young members via internships and active participation. Encourages listening, patience, and valuing diverse perspectives.	<i>“We must never rush. It is important to listen without judgment and allow everyone to express themselves in their own time.”</i> <i>“Through research, publications, and</i>



		<i>information exchange, we uncover stories of women who have often been forgotten.”</i>
Sharing What Works Inspiration, examples, transferable tools	<p>She highlights replicable practices, but no precise tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delegating with trust and support, even for those with little experience, then reviewing and improving work collaboratively.</li><li>• Recognizing contributions to strengthen a sense of belonging and shared purpose.</li><li>• Informal team-building, including occasional gatherings to foster cohesion.</li><li>• Encouraging participation of young members through internships and projects, giving them responsibility and learning opportunities.</li></ul> <p>Her inspiration comes from careful observation, listening to diverse perspectives, online research, and her accumulated professional and life experience, combined with curiosity, empathy, and a commitment to inclusion.</p>	<p><i>“Delegating with trust even to those with little experience, providing support while giving autonomy, then reviewing and improving work together.”</i></p> <p><i>“I stay curious, observe my surroundings, and listen carefully even to casual, unrelated conversations.”</i></p>





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