Women in Data Science Worldwide

WiDS Dornbirn 2026

When: March 26th, 2026

Where: FHV – Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences, Aula, Hochschulstraße 1, 6850 Dornbirn

Details & Registration: https://www.fhv.at/en/event/wids-dornbirn-32880

#WiDSDornbirn2026

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CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

March 26th, 2026

08:30 am	Registration
09:00 am	Opening & Welcome Regine Kadgien, Annika Persson & Kathrin Plankensteiner FHV – Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences
09:30 am	KEYNOTE: Beyond the Algorithm: Google's Culture of Innovation and Automation Emily J Ryan, Enterprise Account Manager, Google
10:15 am	Coffee Break*
10:45 am	AI-Driven Innovation and Foresight Management Corina Bösch, Project Manager AI, illwerke vkw
11:15 am	From Gold Rush to Data Gold: Blum's Journey from Wild Wild West to Power BI Governance Silke Gabriel, Business Analytics Consultant & Power BI Service Owner, Blum
11:45 am	KEYNOTE: Hidden Bias: Uncovering Inequality in Machine Learning and Data Angela Bitto-Nemling, Statistics Researcher, Johannes Kepler University (JKU), Institute for Applied Statistics
12:30 pm	Lunch Break*

* Food & drinks included

13:45 pm	Knowledge for Nothing and Code for Free Heidi Weber, Senior Lecturer, FHV – Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences
02:15 pm	From Highways to Cities: Data-Driven Challenges in Assisted Driving Marie-Theres Boll, Product Manager ADAS Driving Functions, & Yvonne Strigel, Expert Longitudinal Crusing Functions, AUMOVIO
02:45 pm	Connecting Docs, Data, and Design: An LLM Assistant for Stellarator Design Veronika Siska, Software Engineer, Proxima Fusion
03:15 pm	Coffee Break*
03:45 pm	From Coding to AI Literacy: How IT Experts Shape the Next Generation Steffi Susser, Founder, Hacker School Austria
04:15 pm	SLAM: How long does a midlife crisis last? How to become a Dating Scientist. Insights from 5 years of empirical self-trial (n=1) Mätti Stein, Comedian
04:45 pm	Closing
05:00 pm	Aperó & Networking*

* Food & drinks included!

WiDS Dornbirn 2026: Abstracts

Emily J Ryan (Google)

Beyond the Algorithm: Google's Culture of Innovation and Automation

From Search to self-driving cars, Google has a lot of experience applying machine learning to real-world problems.

But the true engine isn't just the algorithm - it's the culture.

This talk explores Google's "AI-first" philosophy, revealing how this unique approach to innovation can transform how organizations operate and what it means for the future of Data Science.

Corina Bösch (illwerke vkw)

AI-Driven Innovation and Foresight Management

At illwerke vkw, AI is more than an idea – it's something we actively try to implement.

In collaboration with Google, we created a foresight management framework that enables us to track emerging trends from research and technology.

In my talk, I'll share how we turn these data insights into practical use cases.

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SPEAKER 2026

Ing. Silke Gabriel
Business Analytics Consultant & Power BI Service Owner, Blum

Silke Gabriel (Blum)

From Gold Rush to Data Gold: Blum's Journey from Wild Wild West to Power BI Governance

The Corona pandemic has changed many things, including Blum. The market environment, which had been fairly stable for decades, suddenly became extremely dynamic - and it has remained that way. Many new questions had to be answered in a very short time. The previous reporting system was not able to keep up with the pace of change. Power BI was the immediate answer. With it, the departments were able to meet their information needs with ad hoc and sometimes creative solutions.

There was no time for order, only speed mattered. This data gold rush led to a Wild West situation.

In this presentation, Silke Gabriel, Microsoft Power BI Service Owner at Julius Blum GmbH, will talk about how Power BI was introduced at Blum and which specific governance measures have been and are being implemented to bring the initial Wild West into alignment with the new Business Analytics strategy.

Angela Bitto-Nemling (JKU)

Hidden Bias: Uncovering Inequality in Machine Learning and Data

In her talk, Angela explores how bias seeps into every stage of the machine learning pipeline — from data collection to model deployment — and how we, as data scientists, can identify, measure, and mitigate these biases.

It highlights both the ethical responsibility and the technical opportunities for building fairer AI systems, with an emphasis on inclusion and representation.

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SPEAKER 2026

Prof. (FH) DI Dr. Heidi Weber
FHV – University of Applied Sciences

Heidi Weber (FHV – Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences)

Knowledge for Nothing and Code for Free

Isn't it great that we can create applications, workflows, and analytics dashboards without coding? Or even better, just by telling our system what we want it to do? 'No code' and 'Low code' platforms are the rising stars in modern development.

But is it that simple? Are these tools true no brainers?
If something sounds too good to be true, it typically is.

Professionals therefore look for the challenges – for the organization and for the individual citizen developer - before they embark on a low code journey. They want to be certain to produce a success. This talk will help getting it right.

Heidi Weber presents strategies how to exploit low code with maximum benefit and minimum fuss.

Marie-Theres Boll & Yvonne Strigel (Aumovio - ehem. Continental)

From Highways to Cities: Data-Driven Challenges in Assisted Driving

Cruising functions are comfort-oriented functions within the domain of Assisted Driving. They are designed to support the driver in performing driving tasks, while the driver remains fully responsible for vehicle control.

Over recent years, the operational design domain (ODD) for Assisted Driving has expanded significantly – from primarily highway scenarios to include urban and interurban environments.

Today, these systems are capable of handling complex urban scenarios. The increased variability and complexity of these environments introduce substantial challenges for example in perception or decision-making which can only be addressed through advanced data science methodologies.

Veronika Siska (Proxima Fusion)

Connecting Docs, Data, and Design: An LLM Assistant for Stellarator Design

At Proxima Fusion, stellarator research spans simulation data, evolving tooling, and highly specialized expertise across physics and engineering. While this ecosystem enables rapid progress, navigating it often requires knowing where to look, how to query systems, or which expert to ask.

In this talk, Veronika will present how they built an LLM-based assistant that provides natural language access to distributed documentation and simulation data through hybrid retrieval and tool use. As research systems become increasingly complex — and often outpace the ability to fully productionalise and standardize them — the assistant makes their knowledge discoverable through natural language access.

By scaling access to expertise — not replacing it — we enable cross-disciplinary teams to explore stellarator designs more fluidly, accelerating collaboration in a living research environment.

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SPEAKER 2026

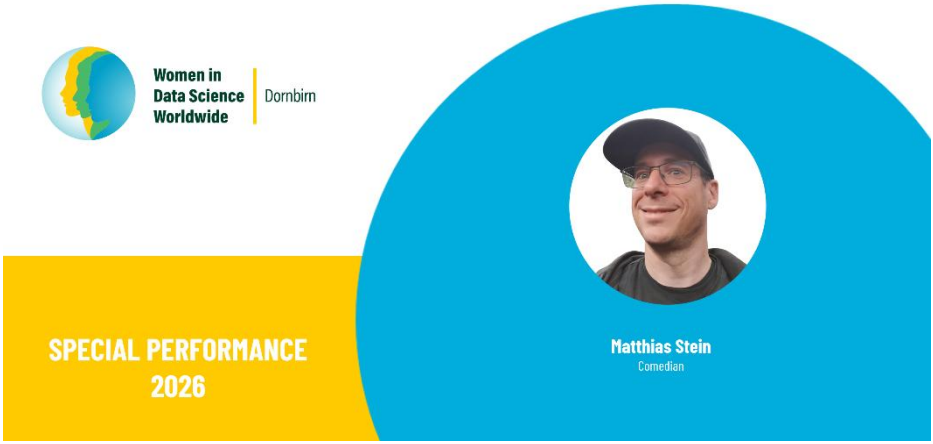
Stefanie Susser
Managing Director
Hacker School Austria

Stefanie Susser (Hacker School Austria)

From Coding to AI Literacy: How IT Experts Shape the Next Generation

As AI transforms every industry, one question remains: how do we prepare tomorrow's talent today?

Learn how coding and AI literacy together build the foundation for future talents - and how IT professionals can drive that change.



Matthias Stein

How long does a midlife crisis last? Or: How to become a Dating Scientist. Insights from 5 years of an empirical self-trial (n=1)

In this unconventional keynote, which could have been titled (but is not) "Why men are from Mars, women are from Venus, and Notebooks are from Jupiter. Or: "Who on earth is Julia?", Mätti talks about data science on women, neuroses, algorithmic diseases, Excel, and other stuff.

Driven by his lifelong experience of not being a data scientist, and fueled by his ongoing midlife crisis, he demonstrates that humor in data science is the only thing preventing us from not laughing. In essence, he explains why he became a dating scientist instead.

His verdict: The pay is worse, and the models are even less reliable!

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WiDS Dornbirn is independently organized by FHV – Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences to be part of the mission to increase participation of women in data science and to feature outstanding women doing outstanding work.

For more details about the WiDS organization and its mission, visit
https://www.widsworldwide.org/