

PRESS RELEASE

Embark backs Women in Asset Servicing to deliver change

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Embark Group (Embark) and Women in Asset Servicing (WiAS) have announced a new partnership designed to increase support for women at all stages of their careers in financial services. The announcement comes ahead of this year's International Women's Day, which this year has the theme 'choose to challenge' – asking us all to commit to “challenge and call out gender bias and inequality.

The partnership will result in Embark providing practical support, resources and expertise to WiAS to further increase the reach and impact of the group and will run for an initial period of two years.

WiAS was established to grow female representation across all levels of the financial services industry, including senior positions, an area of historic under-representation. It seeks to attract women to the sector, retain them within it, nurture their talent, increase their visibility within the industry and provide them with guidance and support to help achieve their career goals.

Embark, as a leading digital retirement and savings platform in the UK, is committed to supporting women in the finance industry and through this collaboration will provide significant expertise and practical support to WiAS including marketing, content production and web development. Embark will also help in attracting speakers for events and promotion for WiAS through its social channels and newsletters.

WiAS have agreed, in turn, to support Embark's graduate programme in which members will play a mentoring role. This will help to ensure that Embark's graduates are exposed to a diverse range of mentors, ideas, and best practice from as wide a pool of people as possible.

Future ambitions for the partnership include mentorship schemes, volunteering programmes, raising the visibility of asset servicing as a career path at STEM events, and building close working partnerships with other STEM supporting groups.

Lisa Worley, Group Head of Marketing, Embark Group, said: *“This is an exciting opportunity for Embark to work with WiAS to support the advancement of women and increase diversity in the finance industry. With this partnership we wanted to deliver tangible, practical support rather than just writing a cheque or paying lip-service to the issue and believe that we can help drive forward real change through our involvement. Embark's scale and distribution network will be invaluable in ensuring that WiAS can extend its reach, maximising the impact of its activities.”*

Kate Webber, Founder, WiAS, said: *“As the next generation of women progress from the early stages of their careers, I want them to be inspired by our industry and understand how to demonstrate their talent and skills as they develop towards senior positions. With that in mind, Embark is providing us with support with a difference. Their expertise, time and the resources they bring with this partnership will directly support our purpose to improve diversity in the industry, particularly at higher levels.”*

Gillian Hepburn, UK Intermediary Solutions Director, Schroders & Member of the Advisory Board, WiAS said: *“There is a real need to continue and extend the work of WiAS to increase diversity in the financial services industry at all levels. With Embark's support we can ensure that we are able to extend the reach of WiAS, providing more advice, support and opportunities that women need. This partnership will help us to make a material difference in the careers of women at all different stages. With a recent study from PwC showing that we are at risk of the UK suffering a 'shecession' as women's workplace equality is threatened due to the impact of COVID-19, this partnership is very timely indeed.*

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About Embark Group

Embark Group is a full-scale UK retirement solutions provider, active in the areas of Investment Platform, SIPP, SSAS, Multi-Asset Funds, Fund Research and Employee Benefits Consulting. The Group trades under the brands Embark, Rowanmoor, Vested and The Adviser Centre. It also operates a wide portfolio of white label services for business such as RBS Coutts, Standard Life, Nutmeg, BestInvest, Charles Stanley, Moneyfarm and Wealthsimple. Businesses within the Embark Group have been established in the market for more than 40 years and have a long history of working closely with intermediary distribution partners and consumers of all levels of affluence.

The Group has more than £38bn in assets under administration on behalf of c415,000 consumer clients, operating across eight UK locations (London, Bolton, Dundee, Edinburgh, Leeds, Leicester, Salisbury and Swindon). Embark has been recognised as one of the most innovative Wealth Tech companies in 2019 and 2020.

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