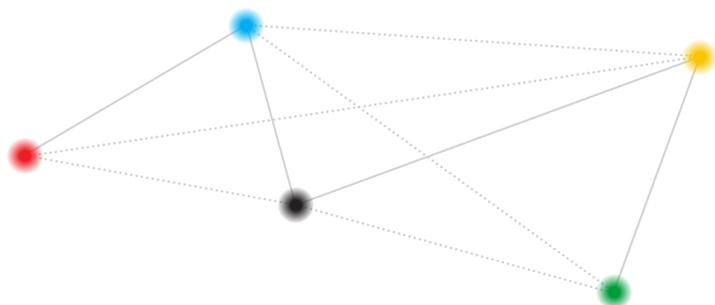


# A Gift from SLOVEnia to the World

Insights  
from the  
**AEIOU**  
Leaders



# AEIOU Leaders from SLOVEnia for a Brighter World



## Why?

Nature, with pandemics, increasing temperatures and frequent storms and floods, is firing clear warning shots. There is no more denying that the actions of individuals and organizations are in many cases harmful to the planet.

If we want to bequeath a planet with decent living conditions to our descendants, we need to drastically transform the economy. I believe that this can only be done by conscious leaders who, with their heart wide open, perceive the world as a unified whole. Leaders who see their role in the wider context and are aware that their decisions directly affect the quality of many people's lives. Such perception

goes far beyond the narrow understanding of responsibility as being connected only to the material resources of an organization. Conscious leaders are aware that they are also responsible for the emotional and spiritual development of their employees, who should be healthy, brimming with life, and see meaning in their work. Such leaders do not manage their organizations solely as business ventures, but also as platforms for fulfilling their mission and the mission of their employees, and thereby contribute to the welfare of the community. They know that their responsibility extends far beyond the limits of the organizations they manage.

Conscious leaders complement their knowledge of business with their open-heartedness and broadness of mind. The purpose of the AEIOU alphabet is to open new dimensions of conscious leadership and thus to serve as a guide for managers who wish to contribute to sustainable success through their actions.

**Sonja Klopčič, the author of The AEIOU of Leadership**

**AROHA:**  
leading with the  
energy of love,

**EB:**  
eco-systemic view on  
interconnectedness,  
mutuality, and  
interdependence,

**IKIGAI:**  
meaning and  
mission,

**OIKOS:**  
responsibility for  
creating value for all,

**UBUNTU:**  
trust-based  
relationships of  
belonging and  
co-creation.

A leadership attitude stems from an individual's intimate, internal attitude to the world, life, obstacles, and opportunities. The internal world of a leader is mirrored in the external world, in the development of his or her relationships with co-workers, business partners, and other stakeholders of the organization. Hence, relationships are the first dimension of conscious leadership.

The second dimension is the understanding of one's personal calling as well as the organization's mission. A leader acts in line with these two pursuits and also lends meaning to the work of his or her co-workers.

Responsibility for the well-being of everyone is the third dimension of conscious leadership. It even encompasses the responsibility for life on our planet.

The fourth dimension of conscious leadership is interconnectedness. This also includes awareness of interdependence and mutuality. Nothing is done in isolation, but rather every action also affects others.

And the fifth dimension of conscious leadership is leading with the energy of love towards everything and everyone. Love is expressed with respect, encouragement, support, nurturing, compassion, inspiration, and enthusiasm.

Leading based on the energy of love, the comprehension of how everything is interconnected, meaningful work to accomplish the organization's mission, responsibility for the well-being of everyone, and on developing relationships, thus represent the five dimensions of conscious leadership

In order to facilitate understanding of these five dimensions, the metaphor of the AEIOU of leadership is created. AEIOU is an acronym of five powerful words that impart the timeless wisdom of indigenous peoples from five continents.

Every instance of progress – also the shift to conscious leadership – begins with contemplating the necessary changes. When we convert our thought into spoken word, it gains power. Words are like base camps whence we can embark on the challenging paths that lie ahead. Evolution into thinking and conscious organizations requires that we build new base camps and find new words for them so that we can upgrade the alphabet of leading with a new outlook on the quest of leaders.

Aroha – Eb – Ikigai – Oikos – Ubuntu. Five words with their corresponding initials A, E, I, O and U constitute a new structure of conscious leadership. Aroha comes from New Zealand, Eb from Central America, Ikigai from Japan, Oikos from Greece, and Ubuntu from South Africa.



# Aroha: Leading with the Energy of Love



Leading propelled by the energy of love is respectful towards everyone and focused on integrity. The leap from rational thinking to seeing with one's heart – as Antoine de Saint-Exupéry put it in *The Little Prince* – is a formidable challenge. However, it is precisely this shift – from an intellectual grasp of concepts and the search for causes to a loving and respectful embrace of the unified whole and all there is – that holds the key to acting with the energy of love. When we act with the energy of love, we accept everything as it is, support it as such, and gently nudge it towards improvement.

As David R. Hawkins so eloquently put it in his *Power vs. Force*, love is not intellectual and does not proceed from the mind. Love emanates from the heart. It has the capacity to lift others and accomplish great feats because of its purity of motive. Love deals with wholes. This ability, often ascribed to intuition, is the capacity for instantaneous understanding without resorting to sequential symbol processing. This abstract phenomenon is, in fact, quite concrete; it is accompanied by a

measurable release of endorphins in the brain. Love has the capacity to discern the essence. It focuses on the goodness of life in all its expressions and augments that which is positive. It dissolves negativity by recontextualizing it rather than by attacking it.

Aroha from the Maori in New Zealand means love on various levels: between people, towards the environment and in connection with the universe. It is an emotional, physical, and spiritual love, love towards past and future generations, and love towards nature.

The word aroha is further composed of four words: aro, ro, ha, and oha. Thus, it is multi-layered and rich in meaning. Aro represents thought, the life principle, as well as focus; ro means internal, introspection; and ha is the life force, breath, energy. Oha corresponds to generosity, progress, abundance, and health.

## “Aroha Mahi, Aroha Atu” (Old Māori proverb)

[Eng. “Love and compassion given, love and compassion received.”]



»Aroha is not just a word; it is an ancient Māori concept. According to Dr Hinemoa Elder, a New Zealand child and adolescent psychiatrist and recipient of the 2019 New Zealand Order of Merit, aroha “describes a deeply felt emotion and a way of thinking that encompasses love, compassion, sympathy and empathy” (2020, p. 4). Aroha denotes so much more than the oversimplification of its English translation: love. As a compound word, aroha contains many intricate meanings, which can also be used as kind of guiding life principles, like (Spiller et al., 2015):

- Aro: thought, paying attention, focus, concentrate
- Ro: inner, within, introspect
- Hā: life force, breath, energy
- Oha: generosity, prosperity, abundance, wealth, gift

Aroha is an all-expansive concept of Love, which should be understood with a capital L! It is an abiding and infinite kind of love. As a leadership principle, it builds on a relational philosophy of empathy, compassion, generosity and respect – to the planet, to other people, and also to oneself. As a practice/behaviour, aroha and wairuatanga (Eng. spirituality) represent a natural pair for maintaining harmony, linking the physical and the metaphysical worlds of the present, past and future. When “love” becomes “Love”, it becomes a gift to us and others«.

**Matevž (Matt) Rašković, PhD, AEIOU ambassador for AROHA.**



# E

## Eb: Interconnectedness and Interdependence

In natural ecosystems, changes and disturbances are a normal occurrence. Systems always respond by trying to restore biological balance. In nature, this process continues until equilibrium is reached, as allowed by the climate conditions in a certain area.

Links between living organisms and the environment also bear relevance to business communities. A business ecosystem is an interdependent community that provides products and services that generate added value for customers. The business ecosystem of a company consists of a substantially wider circle of stakeholders than we would normally expect. Customers are just as much a part of the ecosystem as are suppliers, manufacturers, and other stakeholders. The members of the ecosystem develop their abilities and roles together and align themselves. They progress towards a shared vision, coordinate their contributions, and find roles that are mutually supportive. The emphasis is on the ability to

collaborate and inclusive models. Competition among stakeholders morphs into collaboration. "Playgrounds, not battlegrounds, are the training grounds of creativity and inclusiveness," as Ladeja Godina Košir, founder and executive director of Circular Change, illustrated the difference in our perceptions.

Our connectedness and interdependence is even better encapsulated by the Mayan word eb, which has several meanings. Eb is a road, grass, abundance, growth, harvest, vital energy, the spiral ladder of life. Eb is the connection among people, places, dimensions, and worlds.

Eb can help us to expand our awareness of how we are connected with others. This does not refer only to people who live in the present time. We are also connected to our forebears as well as our descendants. During our everyday actions we must therefore also think of those who are yet to come and make sustainable decisions that will allow our successors to live on this planet.



For me, eb symbolises eco-systemic thinking. Eb invites us to practise an ecosystems approach founded on collaboration, deep listening, and alignment. For indigenous peoples, such a way of thinking was simply natural.

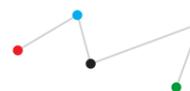
Eb is also a sign in the system of the Mayan Calendars, which some interpret as present the evolutionary system of consciousness. The system scientist Tadeja Jere Jakulin claims the Mayan numerical system and the long count calendar are proven to be some of the most accurate systems for describing the present and future of the civilisation in which we have all evolved. The Mayan nine-level pyramid system denotes the evolutionary system, i.e. the consciousness, which in our time shows the actual level of human consciousness. Seeing the world from the 'big picture' point of view is reaching a level of awareness where linear thinking is being replaced by systems thinking. The Mayans explained that civilisation would achieve a system of conscious co-creation.

The physicist, systems theorist and deep ecologist Fritjoh Capra says the key problems facing today's world – energy, climate change, economic inequality, war – are interconnected, interdependent and intertwined. Solutions require a shift in our perceptions, thinking and values.

»We can't change the system unless we raise the consciousness«, says Otto Sharmer, the author of Theory U, adding that: »The task of a leader is to shift the inner world«.

When we connect all this, eb gives us clear systemic guidelines to enable us to make decisions in a way that follows nature's ability to sustain life.

**Sonja Klopčič, MSc, AEIOU ambassador for EB.**



# Ikigai: Meaning and Mission

Ikigai was coined from two separate Japanese characters: iki (life) and gai (value). It is hard to find a literal meaning, but it roughly translates as “the meaning of life”. It stems from the understanding that the sum of the small joys in everyday life results in a more fulfilling and meaningful life.

Ikigai is where the four primary elements converge: mission, passion, profession, and vocation. We are confronted with more and more data that reveal extremely high stress levels, higher levels of anxiety, and employees' perception that work negatively affects their health. These data strongly correlate with the fact that people do not see any meaning in

their work, do not know what their personal calling is, nor are they living it. They do not know or they forgot that it is their personal responsibility to continuously seek out and develop what they are good at, what they love, what the world needs, and what they can be paid for. Ikigai is where all this overlaps and it is a synonym for an endless pursuit of the path on which we can fully live our mission – both personal as well as that of the organization we are associated with.

Also on the level of an organization, ikigai propels us toward doing what is in line with our deep-seated beliefs and values and what is beneficial to the community.



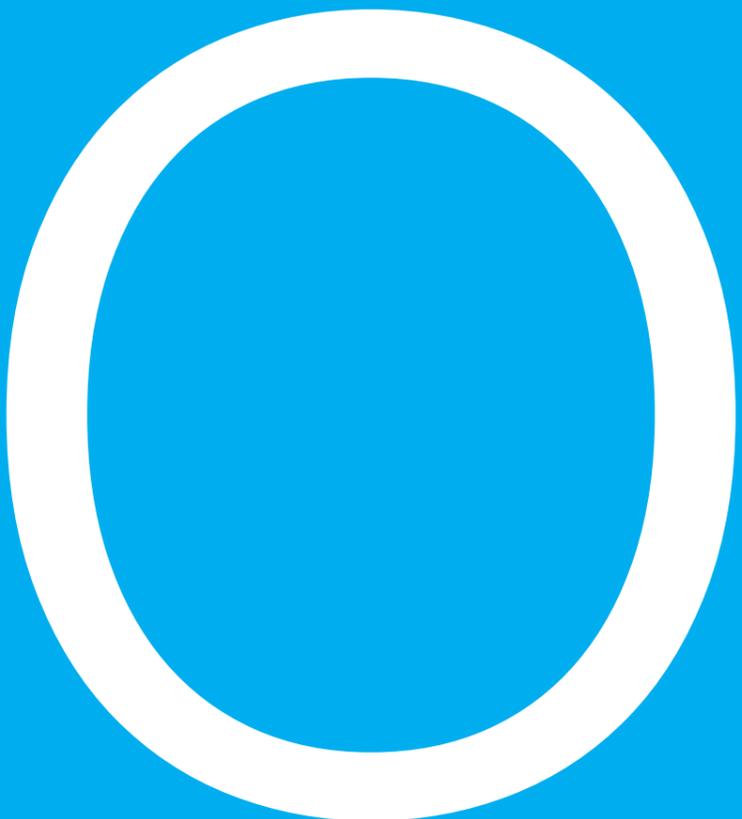
Ikigai is a Japanese term composed of Iki (生き), which means life, and Gai (甲斐), standing for worth or value. Ikigai is translated in English as the value of life and is often referred to as the meaning of life. Upon hearing the words Value of Life, we think of measuring and quantifying. It makes us ask: what is the value of my life? What is the value of the life of someone who enjoys immense success? However, ikigai is not about achievements, but about being aware of how valuable our life already is and appreciating all of the small joys in our life. We can and shall find ikigai in various areas of life – our family, friends, hobbies, and profession. This will not only make us resilient, but also happy, and eager for life.

Each of us possesses unique talents. When we employ them, our life becomes more meaningful and fulfilling. It is important that leaders understand that their employees have their own ikigai too. Good leaders respect the ikigai of their colleagues. They place them in positions where they feel valued and that their work is meaningful. The collective spirit of fulfilled and content workers will be reflected in their organisation. This will give a Purpose or Ikigai to the organisation as a whole.

**Vesna Lavtizar, PhD, AEIOU ambassador for IKIGAI.**



# Oikos: Responsibility for the Well-being of Everyone



The word economy traces its origins back to the Greek language. It derives from the words oiko (house) and nomo (laws, rules). In his book 95 tez, pribitih na vrata svetiščica neoliberalnega kapitalizma (95 Theses Nailed to the Door of the Temple of Neoliberal Capitalism), Friar Karel Gržan reminds us that the word economy primarily means exploring and maintaining the rules of coexistence that allow everyone on this planet, our shared home, to live in harmony. In his work Politics, Aristotle describes two kinds of economies. The first, or the actual one, is based on oikos. This is economics in relation to human needs, where people are producers because they require certain things in order to survive. This is natural economics whereby a product is converted into money so that a person can satisfy his or her existential needs. The second economy, by contrast, concerns chrematistics – being occupied with gaining wealth, accumulating money as an end in itself. Money is invested in goods for the sole purpose of earning even more money – hoarding

money just for the sake of it. Aristotle warned that amassing money as an end in and of itself is an unnatural activity that dehumanizes those who practice it. All too often, the concept of economy is exploited to justify chrematistics. The spirits of oikos, however, instills in economics the rules of mutual respect, fairness, accountability, and taking care of everyone.

Oikos is a synonym for conscientious management. The word originally denoted family, family property, and household. Being responsible for possessions or, even more importantly, for the well-being of everyone is a pivotal dimension of leadership, thus a leader should know what the key elements are that create well-being and how they change as our consciousness expands.



»Oikos refers to three related, yet distinct concepts: the family, the family's property, and the house. Its meaning also depends on the context in which it is being used.

In ancient Greek, oikos is the equivalent of a household, house, or family. An oikos was the basic unit of society in most Greek city-states, and included the head of the oikos, his immediate family, and slaves living together in one domestic setting, as well as those with whom they came into regular contact. These 8–15 people may be their neighbours, co-workers, a local barista, a grocery store clerk....

Literally translated, oikos means home and heart. Throughout the centuries, the word became the prefix "ecos." It conjures up images of Earth and forms the basis of words like ecology, economics and ecosystem. It is unfortunate that the word "heart" got lost in translation, becoming used only for the "house" or "household" in a dry economics sense. Who knows what the world would look like today had "heart" remained an important component of the economy and was addressed as thoroughly as the financial part.

Oikos may also be looked at from different perspectives. On one hand, as a safe space within which the right things can happen, preserving both words, home and heart. It may also be a good antipole, a parallel option to global transhumanism, stressing the importance of a community and caring for each other. And as part of the AEIOU model where oikos is one of the key aspects of modern leadership«,

**Violeta Bulc, MSc, AEIOU ambassador for OIKOS.**



# Ubuntu: Relationships Based on Trust



Leadership can take place and develop only in relationships between people. In mutual relationships we also learn from each other, develop, change, train ourselves, and become stronger. It is important to be aware that we influence ourselves and the people around us with our thoughts and actions, that our intentions alone can infuse a moment with beauty or bitterness, open or close the doors of opportunity, create favorable circumstances or barriers, deepen a relationship or merely scratch at its surface. The attention that we invest in a relationship also influences that relationship, even though it may appear we are merely being a passive observer.

Relationships with others can help us understand our own personality and hold up a mirror to ourselves. Just like a plain mirror reflects our external appearance, other people reflect our own personality. That which disturbs, angers, or excites us about others is also within ourselves.

Relationships with other people open yet another dimension – collective creation. Everyone has probably experienced how a team can come up with new ideas by employing the brainstorming method. The various perspectives of the team’s members can conjure up new associations, combinations, and strokes of insights. The first person’s idea can stir the second one’s imagination, a combination crosses the mind of the third one, the fourth one thinks out of the box and suggests something completely novel, and in this way everyone feeds off of each other’s ideas. Similarly, everyone has probably had the experience of delving deep into some work and suddenly previously unconnected pieces started to form a full picture. One is so immersed in what one is doing that one loses track of the surroundings and time and fully enjoys the act of creating; we say that such a person has entered a state of flow. Collaboration by people who are fully connected can also unite these two experiences of flow and the entire team can thus tap into unprecedented enthusiasm and co-create in the “zone”.

The word ubuntu, which comes from South Africa, is chosen as a synonym for building relationships. It says that I am who I am because you are who you are. We become who we are as a result of our relationships with other people.



“The Ubuntu concept – that of heartfelt understanding of the inherent goodness in every human and respect for their journey and whatever may have happened to them. In this interconnectedness, there is no feeling of dominance. Trust comes from the core of being. Actions are done in the spirit of not wanting something in return. Having an understanding of human complexity; bringing to awareness our unconscious bias regarding diversity; nurturing compassion; choosing forgiveness over revenge or ignorance; bringing in hope; and believing in fundamental goodness and the common good – this is how I feel the spirit of Ubuntu. In line with the spirit of Ubuntu, I am interested and care about You and We, from the centre of the dignity of I”,

**Barbara Cukjati, MSc, AEIOU  
ambassador for UBUNTU.**



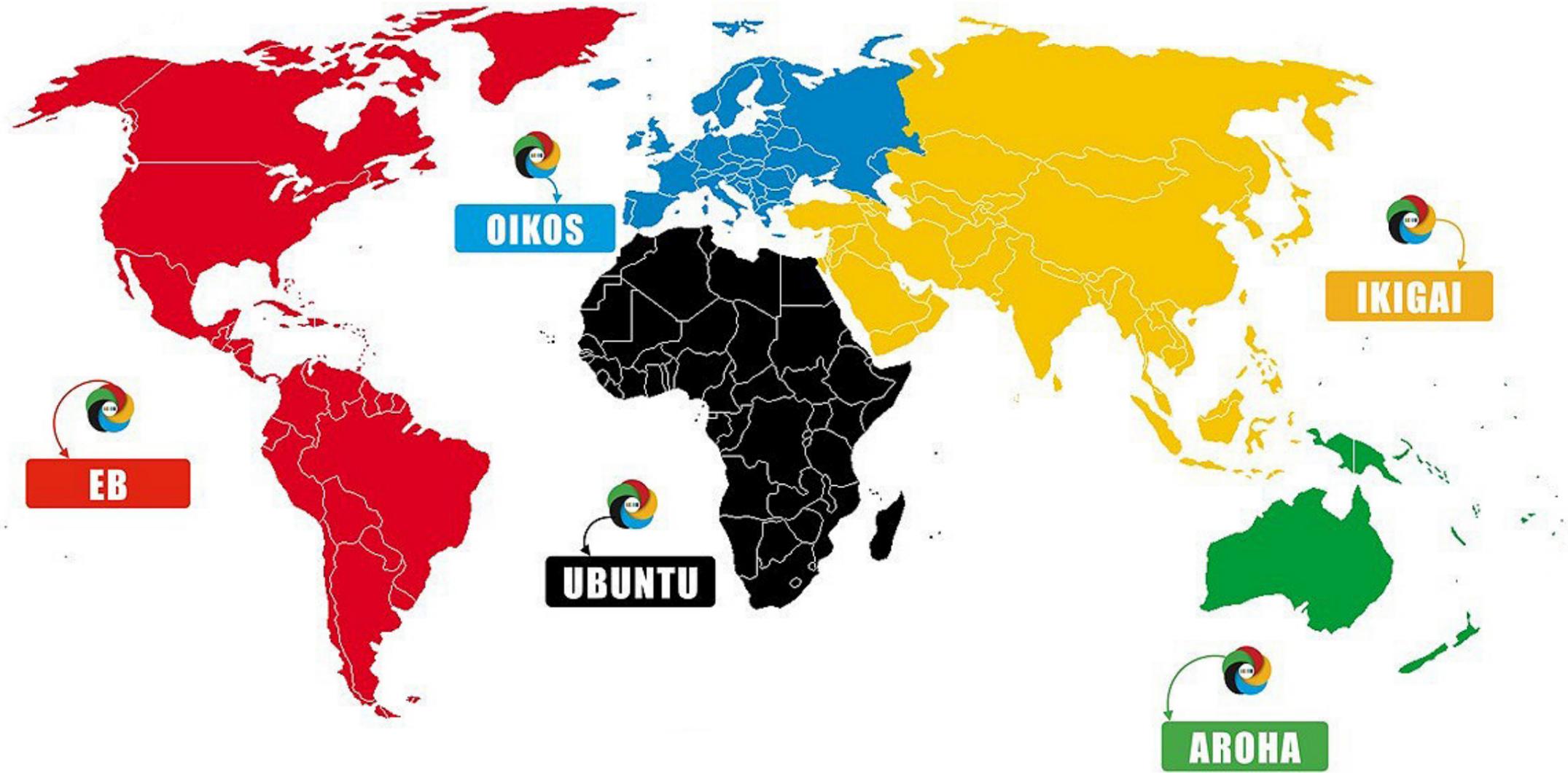
By linking the selected words aroha, eb, ikigai, oikos, and ubuntu into the AEIOU of leadership, we can also symbolically interconnect all the continents or the entire world, just as the interlaced Olympic rings united the five continents under the guidance of Pierre de Coubertin.

The interlocked rings of the Olympic symbol represent coexistence, mutual respect, and friendship among the nations from the five continents of planet Earth depicted in different colors. Blue is Europe, black is Africa, red America, yellow Asia, and green Australia with Oceania. These are also the continents whence originate the words that convey the ancient wisdom of their first, indigenous inhabitants. The words aroha – love, eb – interconnectedness, ikigai – mission, oikos – responsibility for the well-being of everyone, and ubuntu – relationships, together as AEIOU represent a universal collection of five dimensions for conscious leaders from around the globe.

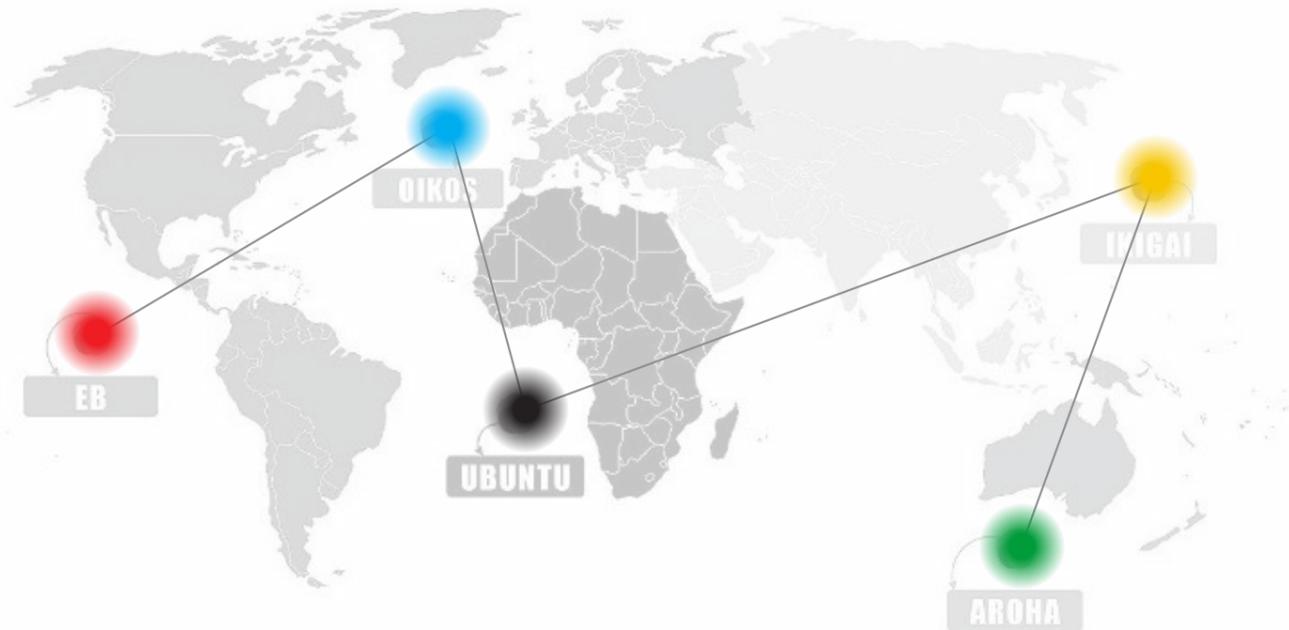
The powerful sound and vibration of vowels is reflective of the effect that leaders have on the people around them with their energy and vibrations. Vowels are the carriers of syllables and, together with consonants, they form shorter or longer strings, either accented or not. Syllables dictate the rhythm and compose words. Words form sentences that carry meaning, purpose, and message. This is analogous to how modern leaders act: they connect between themselves and with co-workers so that they all assume an important role, create in their own rhythm, and find meaning in their work and in

collaboration with others. Together they innovate products, services, and solutions for the prosperity of all. Just as virtually all words cannot exist without a vowel, so a leader cannot act consciously without gaining a profound understanding of and embodying all the five words that make up the AEIOU acronym. As leaders internalize the AEIOU of leadership, their attitude towards business undergoes a radical transformation. Consequently, they do not aspire to massive production, but rather cater to the true needs of consumers. They use resources wisely. They are conscious in their

use of energy sources as well as environmentally sound input materials. They plan circular models for reusing raw materials. They see their business as a platform for developing people and sustaining happiness and not only as a means to achieve narrow business goals. They set broader business goals that serve not only the employees and the company, but also the community at large. Amassing wealth for themselves and the company ceases to be their goal. Success acquires a new dimension and is measured in terms of the success of the people around them and the well-being of the entire ecosystem.



# A Gift from SLOVEnia to the World: Insights from AEIOU Leaders



»I dream of a world in which everyone leads themselves out of love, thinks in terms of ecosystems, lives their personal mission and the mission of the organisation, and creates trust-based relationships for prosperity. I want to live in such a world. This is a world where each individual is the sun that shadows always shun, as the Slovenian poet Tone Pavček says.

The universe shows that such a world is possible. Everything flows in harmony in the universe. Our Sun is just one of the stars. Stars connect with each other to form

constellations, and constellations create galaxies. The Milky Way, our galaxy, contains 200 to 400 billion stars. And this is just one of billions of galaxies in the observable universe. In this whole unimaginable abundance of stars, everything flows as it should and creates all that is needed to support life on our planet. Indigenous people on planet Earth have been very much aligned with the stars and with cosmic cycles. Many of their wisdoms are woven into the concepts of aroha, eb, ikigai, oikos and ubuntu.

**What a coincidence: when we connect the places on the five continents from where these words come from, we get the shape of the constellation Cassiopeia. Five of its brightest stars form a W-shape – to remind us that We are co-creating the World.**

Every AEIOU leader is a sun in themselves, a star that emits light. Together, connected with the energy of love, we can build a new World.

**Sonja Klopčič, MSc, initiator of the community of AEIOU leaders**



»As a leader, I wake up every day thinking about how I can develop the talents and competencies of my colleagues, friends and acquaintances with the goal that they are HAPPY in private life and efficient and successful in business life«,

**Damijan Andjelković.**



»The AEIOU leadership model reflects our mission in the learning communities The Positive Psychology Marathon and The Pan-European Conference on Digital Education, which is increasing access to knowledge for all people so that they can lead their life with purpose«,

**Blanka Tacer, PhD.**



»In essence, humanity only speaks one language – the language of love. That is why AEIOU leaders use the alphabet of the heart to accomplish its ends«,

**Maja Ambrož, MSc.**



»Being a heartfelt leader, serving with the energy of love for the well-being of everyone (people&planet) according to the 5 AEIOU Leadership approaches is a wonderful role that through a language of responsibility and collaborative relationships based on trust and respect is helping to create a sustainable eco-civilisation for the future. Together, we can do more and everything!«,

**Klaudija Javornik.**



»My mission in our company Insights d.o.o. is to discover and develop the potential held by people and organisations. The AEIOU leadership concept resonates with me and my way of working, while it also represents a beacon I turn to in the event of doubt and ambiguity«,

**Natalie Cvikl Postružnik, MSc.**



»I love creating a new work culture based on the AROHA (leadership with love), one that I hope will become a new reality in entrepreneurship«,

**Nika Močnik.**



»I choose AEIOU leadership as a heartfelt and ethical way to our sustainable future. The stakes have rarely been any higher«,

**Matic Kadliček.**



»An inner voice and heart energy urge me to encourage pupils to master their talents sincerely, with love and responsibility for the well-being of both them and their descendants«,

**Nataša Grom.**



»As an AEIOU leader, I work intuitively with the energy of love – from the source of old wisdom, my values and life mission. I am good at recognising the key capabilities of individuals and encouraging people to collaborate on meaningful projects to bring about better relationships and a sustainable society«,

**Estera Lah Poljak.**



»Participating in the AEIOU community of leaders inspires me, satiates my curiosity and desire for connection and belonging, and satisfies my aspiration for continuous personal growth leading to a better version of myself, as a person, and as a heartfelt leader«,

**Milena Rakun, MSc.**



»Persistence is the Key to Achievement with AEIOU values. From words to action #vdczasavje«,

**Špela Režun, PhD.**





»Humankind needs big changes. Sooner than we expected!«,

**Žiga Vavpotič, MSc.**



»The meaning of life and leadership is to grow love and respect for others«,

**Martina Brec.**



»As an AEIOU leader, I wish to help create an inclusive, collaborative environment focused on lifelong learning, centred on each human being and their relationship to their fellow humans, the wider community, all living beings, nature and the planet, with the ultimate goal of prosperity for all. Together, we can make it happen«,

**Tatjana Kolenc.**



»I support leading people from the (energy of love) heart through understanding interdependence and interconnectedness. I encourage the responsibility and creativity of the individual to find meaning and to contribute to the mission of the company and preserve the state of nature«,

**Marta Kelvišar.**



»I think one of the most important qualities of a good leader is leading by example. I strongly believe in honesty and being authentic. And mostly, walk the talk – do as you preach«,

**Petra Juvančič.**



»With personal energy and integrity, I ensure the running of business processes and actively seek pragmatic solutions and proposals«,

**Igor Vuković, PhD.**



»I am committed to respecting everyone, promoting responsibility, collaboration and a positive attitude, to finding solutions and I believe in the heartiness of everyone«,

**Mojca Kunšek, MSc.**



»The AEIOU approach to leadership welcomes the agility of the mind, the alertness of the heart, and humanity, all of which I identify with. Leadership is thus part of a mindful relationship with one another and the community as a whole«,

**Nana Šumrada Slavnič, MSc, PhD.**



»I believe that strengthening our virtues is a crucial step in the evolution of our consciousness«,

**Urška Lan.**



»In 2007, Slovenians were the first in the world to start to measure the quality of relationships. I believe that through my engagement in developing and implementing the methodology and the growth ecosystem, I am contributing to AEIOU leadership«,

**Edita Krajnovič, MSc.**



»As a Business Intuition trainer, I am deeply connected to the spirit of AEIOU leadership. It sustains the same meaningful and soulful intentions of prosperity in purposeful business engagements that leads to sustainable results for people and the planet. AEIOU teaches conscious leadership that encompasses the intuitive skill of using the whole spectrum of human intelligence: rational, emotional and spiritual. Without it, we stay lost in the maze of the limited mind«,

**Manica Čelofiga.**



»I believe in our team's developmental, innovative, sometimes imaginatively feasible ideas which we can implement together and do something good for the community«,

**Biljana Škarja, MSc.**



»As a personal strategist, a profession developed at Hedoni Intuition, I will continue to support the AEIOU process with Divine Philosophy Alaj«,

**Bogo Seme.**



»To me, AEIOU Leadership means to always lead in every situation with a higher purpose for the greatest good of yourself, the company, society, and the planet. The AEIOU Leadership code – Aroha, Eb, Ikigai, Oikos, and Ubuntu – are breakthroughs that support me in various situations according to my purpose in a given situation«,

**Tea Odlazek Mesar, MSc.**



»Leading with love, thinking broadly and being aware of the importance of interconnectedness or interdependence are the main reasons I decided to become an AEIOU leader«,

**Nina Jambrec, Msc.**



»I believe this is the right way for a better tomorrow. Not only for employees, but for all who live by the AEIOU principles. Because it is sustainable and arises from the next level of consciousness, since it's based on growing relationships, connection and cooperation«,

**Urša Podobnik.**



»I believe the secret of living is giving. And the same goes for an AEIOU leader. Also for the AEIOU community«,

**Lucija Sajevec, MSc.**



»I am an economist by education and a humanist by occupation. A big nature lover and a loyal supporter of the motto Mens sana in corpore sano. I believe in living with meaning because if you find your WHY, you will always get your HOW. Constantly learning and discovering new things, developing my own potential and compassionately encouraging others to develop their potential is my passion and daily food«,

**Janez Žezlina, MSc.**



»I always try to act according to my inner energy, values, knowledge and experience for the lives of everyone I influence through my actions and decisions to make them easier, more creative and fulfilling. The five dimensions of AEIOU leadership are the framework in which I have recognised what I have been striving to do since time immemorial«,

**Matej Detič.**





»I want to engage and motivate people as well as to help them feel fulfilled in their work environment. I see leading with love as leading for the future«,

**Mario Gluhak.**



»Simply because I believe in the strength of encouragement, recognition and awareness on a personal level, and because I believe in the strength of cooperation and contribution. Everyone needs to understand and find their own meaning in the context of the common purpose«,

**Stane Rožman.**



»As a leader, I strive to be empathetic and act responsibly regarding the environment and my employees. I have a clear set of values and am aware of my mission. I lead by example, which does not mean that I put myself first, but inspire my fellow workers, excite them and give them the opportunity to implement their own ideas, initiatives, as well as allow for some mistakes«,

**Marko Lukič.**



»AEIOU values are some kind of 'glue' for the global networks I co-create, connect and nurture in the field of the circular economy. Through systemic collaboration and heartily actions, we are transcending the boundaries of existing structures and replacing them with emerging collaborative forms based on AEIOU principles«,

**Ladeja Godina Košir, MSc.**



»I believe in AEIOU leadership and I am grateful to be able to live my mission by encouraging individuals and helping them develop their talents, to grow and to reinvent in a safe environment. When you see someone shining, be happy and successful, it's the greatest gift«,

**Metka Glas.**



»The AEIOU concept contains ancient wisdom from across the planet, transformed into the principles of modern leadership. By acting in line with these principles, we can create a better world and anyone who feels responsible enough for the future of our children must join«,

**Andrej Božič.**



»At some point, each of us must play the role of a leader. When I find myself in this role, I build relationships on mutual respect, I also take responsibility for the prosperity of others, I believe in interdependence, and with my personal mission I also make sense of the work of others. That's why I believe I am an AEIOU leader«,

**Živa Gorup Reichmann.**



»I live the belief that is not worth dealing with opposition to change, but it is better to look for its positive sides. The AEIOU Leadership principles help me spread this belief more easily among my fellow workers«,

**Anisa Faganelj.**



»Leading with love makes me an AEIOU leader,«

**Marko Malerič.**



»We convene progressive organizations, which understand that the path to the future is green and resilient. Climate neutrality is no longer an alternative, it is imperative«,

**Ana Struna Bregar.**



»I believe in the 'butterfly effect' attributed to dynamic systems. And humanity is such a system. Small differences can make a big impact. Through my work, I want to add and contribute to better leadership«,

**Ksenija Špiler Božič.**



»I see AEIOU leadership as a way of life, a certain way of collaborating, thinking, feeling and acting. AEIOU leadership acts like a compass for me. It helps me co-create in the right way, here and now, with a view to the future«,

**Katarina Primožič Ramoveš, MSc.**



»Values are the foundation of relationships and leadership. AEIOU connects us to the ancient natives and expresses the interconnectedness of the people who are especially close to me. They give us the strength and determination to spread these values for future generations«,

**Ajša Vodnik, MSc.**



»Excellent AEIOU leaders are those who persistently convey their vision of a thinking company to the employees by example and love. At the same time, they are able to build a creative work environment with the appropriate change-for-development dynamics. Top AEIOU leaders know how to work with open-minded people holding different viewpoints, take account of and value them, while employees return this sense of value by being creative and enthusiastic in their cooperation«,

**Peter Mlakar, MSc.**



»Ever wondered how to help people on their way to success? I lead from the heart with attentiveness by placing trust in people and their potential. Working together, we inspire each other, we grow, and we are becoming the best version of ourselves«,

**Taja Kaker.**



»We all need a tribe of fellow leaders. A circle where diverse stories, projects and experience connect us to the deeper essence and wisdom of leadership«,

**Matej Delakorda.**



I strive to co-create holistic and sustainable strategies and solutions for a more equitable business environment, one that ensures the creation of value for all stakeholders. These times of volatility and uncertainty call for conscious leadership, respect for all parts of our business eco-system.

**Lea Benedejčič, MSc**



»Exploring the five concepts interconnected in AEIOU leadership offers a great platform for creating the ambitious change we need as a society«,

**Uršula Butkovič.**





»I believe that the future belongs to those who have yet to come. Such thinking requires not only personal but broader responsibility; to respect the principle of inclusion and diversity on all levels! Sustainable leadership is the determination to create a better tomorrow«,

**Medeja Lončar.**



»Awareness of responsibility for successful business, with empathy for fellow human beings in relationships with employees and customers, connecting with positive energy, courage, heart and sustainability. And, finally, my mission of involving young people, that is exactly what I want to be and I want to lead my colleagues along this path to a common goal. The AEIOU dimensions should be the dimensions of every one of us, not only while at work – we live by them«,

**Melita Rozman Dacar, MSc.**



»Just as harmony is important for a melody, the harmony of all leadership dimensions is important for success in leadership. In the AEIOU leadership messages, I recognise messages for the required awareness and a holistic approach, on both a personal level and the level of the organisation and the wider living environment«,

**Sonja Špoljarič.**



»Leading with love means acting for the whole beehive, not just one bee only. It means finding certainty amid uncertainty to reassure, guide and get the best out of teams. Exploring and caring about what inspires us. AEIOU empowers love, trust and kindness, unique leaders from SLOVEnia, a nation of BEEkeepers«,

**Tanja Subotić Levanič.**



»I believe that modern leaders can only be successful if they are 'aware' of their actions and influence on their surroundings, so that they know themselves and are constantly building a 'better self' for their teams, colleagues and organisations. The AEIOU leadership provides a compass while taking responsibility for co-creating a better business world«,

**Boštjan Gorjup.**



»The AEIOU concept is the best possible leadership principle and at the same time a personal attitude. In all of my work, I seek to follow this principle wholeheartedly«,

**Janez Škrabec.**



»I am a heartfelt leader because I believe it is the most natural way to lead, for the good of the individual and the system as a whole. I love my colleagues and feel it is my mission to care for and connect them. AEIOU is my lighthouse on the undulating path of leadership«,

**Tina Merčnik.**



»I strive to be an AEIOU leader because leadership as we have known it so far will not successfully take us to the next level. The hierarchical leadership pyramids of the past must be transformed into co-creator communities of the future«,

**Vita Godec, PhD.**



»It's time to change how we do business. The AEIOU model suits this call for change«,

**Jože Mislej.**



»The AEIOU leadership is new paradigm for leading ourselves and business. It reminds us who we are and what our purpose is in business«,

**Martina Praprotnik.**



»I want to create an environment that offers encouragement and hope to young people«,

**Jure Knez, PhD.**



»Being a leader is a privilege. You don't gain this by position, but by who you are. To follow the principles of AEIOU means to live my mission«,

**Zvezdana Lubej.**



»Heart leadership means mutual respect, compassion, cooperation, transparent action, support for one's co-workers, and good example-setting and honesty with a great deal of inspiration and creativity, supported by love«,

**Nataša Bratina, MSc, PhD.**



»I truly believe that in such a rapidly changing world we must change constantly and adapt our ways of handling, we have to build even stronger relationships, and dedicate ourselves to leadership with empathy so that as a society we remain successful and constantly evolving. We are often too goal-oriented and forget about that, so it's time to change this«,

**Katja Kraškovic, MSc.**



»I believe that leadership is the path of responsibility and the path of continuous learning; it is the willingness to establish such a partnership that enables everyone to do what they do best. Open collaboration, respect, professionalism, and trust ensure the development and future of humanity«,

**Gorazd Pfeifer.**



»To AEIOU or not AEIOU, that is not the question! For me, AEIOU means wholeness: One world (that is globally connected), One person (human and businessperson in one) and One common approach to development (Agenda 2030, where the social, ecological and economic interact and cooperate as one)«,

**Tičo Zupančič.**



»The principles of AEIOU leadership are in line with my leadership philosophy. Among them, I pay special attention to aroha«,

**Peter Malenšek.**



»AEIOU incorporates all the values that ensure better relationships and a more connected society. In my professional career, the main principle I follow is "leading by example". I am very committed to sustainability and strive to incorporate it into every aspect of my work. I am proud that, together with my team, we are successfully helping to establish sustainable tourism in Slovenia«,

**Maja Pak, MSc.**



»I love life and enjoy co-creating with a purpose. The AEIOU guidelines remind us of the importance of working with passion, sharing love, and nurturing relationships. AEIOU should be THE attitude both inside and outside the workplace«,

**Sabina Košak.**





As an executive coach and exponential transformation expert, I've noticed that the fast-changing technological world is rapidly eroding our human qualities. The qualities that indigenous leaders, by design are living according to, have become ever more important. AEIOU describes five of them that can be applied directly to shift the focus back to human uniqueness. These revived insights make better leaders, I believe.

**Paul Epping**



A future full of goodness is finally within reach. For all of us. Let's grab it and make it so. Together.

**Patrick Cowden**



Leaders need to activate their heart in addition to the mental. Anyone who does not know or is unable to do this now will no longer be a leader tomorrow. AEIOU helps me become aware of these shifts.

**Alenka Šajn Slak, PhD**



To be a leader, first and utmost you must be a human. To lead others, because you genuinely care for others and you are interested in their well-being, growth and safety. You provide them with guidance and a safe haven.

Many people call themselves a leader, but a true leader doesn't need a proclamation of their leadership. They embody it.

I joined AEIOU because of that. To be part of a community that values and shares the pristine characteristics of true leadership. Making a ruffle in time and space for a better future.

**Ksenija Frelih, MBA**



I chose AEIOU leadership as it aligns perfectly with what I understand to be sustainable leadership. Having good and honest relationships is the foundation of being a good leader. Believing and living your mission are grounds to success, while also recognising your responsibility towards others and yourself. Becoming a great leader is impossible without leading with love and understanding that we are all connected and that our actions affect others.

**Sabina Gros, MBA**



AEIOU leadership is fundamental!

Every day we are reminded of the importance of simply doing the work. To be successful in everyday business requires understanding the basic necessary fundamentals and spending long periods practising them. Results rarely exist without a consistent process of doing the work. There is no magical shortcut to success. But there is knowledge shared in AEIOU leadership, which is magical.

**Tevž Korent**



Aroha, Eb, Ikigai, Oikos and Ubuntu are universal principles that are guiding us towards a brighter world in which we empower each other and co-create for the better of all – present and future generations. Therefore, I'm grateful and happy to be part of the AEIOU community, which is supporting and promoting positive values for the greater good.

**Klemen Medved, MBA**



Enabling personal and business transformations is what I live for. In this way, I can contribute to people's well-being. Using AEIOU as one of the guidelines ensures an approach that is aligned with my personal and general society's values as well. I am proud to be part of the global family.

**Miha Kožuh**



The spirit of AEIOU leadership translates exactly to what I believe in and seek to experience. Leadership based on the divine dimension of every human being. We are all leaders.

Being an AEIOU leader makes me feel that I am contributing to a better world, a world of love, collaboration and the evolution of humanity to the Golden Age.

**Maria Isabel Monteiro Barreto, PhD**



The five principles represented by AEIOU are not merely a recipe for leadership excellence – they are, in effect, the cardinal principles of the philosophy of life. They comprise the ecosphere of being – the ultimate truths that inscribe and circumscribe all universal human values. Together, they provide a firm foundation for "ease of living", and the basis for all relationships among humans, as well as humans' relationship with nature.

They are validated by thoughts that have been endorsed and corroborated over the centuries, and are now the epitome of all that is and will always be the noblest virtues of human beings.

**Ravi Chaudhry**



AEIOU leadership is a special form of giving. It is a story that is not written by oneself. It is a story that you live while you look for balance in the world and in others.

**Alma Čaušević Klemenčič**



have 5 main dimensions, 5 senses, and at least 5 different intelligences. I support the 5-extensions AEIOU leadership model because it embodies integrity that opens the door to expanded consciousness.

**Urška Merljak**



On 8 March 2022, on the invitation of French President Emmanuel Macron, as one of the 21 leaders, I committed myself to implementing the Declaration in support of stronger professional equality within the private sector during the French Presidency of the European Union. I understand this as my contribution to AEIOU leadership.

**Sabina Sobočan, MSC**



There are two things I tell myself every morning: "Be yourself Jonathan" and "Show Up". AEIOU helps me put that into practice, to then help others do the same."

**Jonathan Cave**



Leadership is a choice. And we can choose to lead only when the forces within ourselves are in sync. AEIOU is the coming together of five key forces that create the fusion energy needed to guide people, organisations and the world onto the right trajectory of value and sustainability. AEIOU gives me five key signals every day that tell me I am leading in the right direction.

**Meta Grošelj**



As an innovation and growth coach, I support multidimensional skills and mindsets aligned to AEIOU, because I know that growth in one's company is synchronistically aligned with growth in people, who co-evolve. The most impactful companies and leaders are trusting the power of trust itself. They are leading with love and curious passion. They welcome complexity, even some chaos, as decisions decentralise. And they do all these things in order to exponentialise the value of their people, their products, services and impact. Yes, AEIOU leaders are doing all that with a humble spirit and a smile. They are very good dancers, too!

**Curtis Michelson**



Humane, peaceful and sustainable world with the ecocivilisation culture can be collectively co-created by the global AEIOU leaders. Thus: "I am AEIOU".

**Khin Ni Ni Thein, PhD**



AEIOU leadership is one of the worlds' precious tools. »To see a World in a Grain of Sand and a Heaven in a Wild Flower, Hold Infinity in the Palm of your Hand and Eternity in an Hour«, as master Blake put it. As it is with every tool, we need to master its use.

**Eva Premk Bogataj, PhD**



I believe we are all connected – humans to each other, and humanity to everything in existence. We cannot disintegrate. We are whole. The AEIOU model allows us to embrace leadership as a wholesome practice that fosters this inextricable connection between us instead of severing it, as much of traditional corporate culture does.

**Katarina Veselko**

As a human being, we





I am an AEIOU leader because I firmly believe that you can change things only by changing yourself. To change yourself, you first need to accept everything you are now and be kind.

**Božidarka Radović, MSc**



AEIOU philosophy is not only about leadership; it is about how you live, think, do and grow.

AEIOU leadership is an excellent step towards creating a better world – business and private.

**Nina Tušar Markež**



When I read the AEIOU Manifesto, it aligned in symbiosis with my values to contribute to a regenerative world. The principles of the leadership code also represent the feminine leadership qualities of connection, adaptability, cyclical thinking, fulfilment in purpose which are rooted in eco-systems. It's time to join hands and hearts together for a braver, connected and more compassionate world, and the AEIOU Leadership code invites us into this intuitive action. It's been an honour to meet other leaders who embrace this ancient knowledge and who have the courage to lead with Love. Imagine what we can co-create together! Deeply grateful that Sonja followed her call to create the foundation for us. The time is now to lead with Love, Purpose and Heart.

**Eleftheria Kakambouras**



AEIOU is a concept that underpins a contemporary definition of leadership. One can easily associate with its values aimed at sustainable prosperity. Leadership is a mission with timeless values, its fundamentals wielding responsibility for humanity and the environment. Now is the right time to build smarter businesses for a stronger world – a world for the future in which sustainability lies at the heart of business."

**Sanja Savič, MSc**



The AEIOU values are really impactful on me. The AEIOU leadership code applies to your life as an individual and/or as part of management of an organisation. As ambassadors of life itself and leaders in personal life, organisational function, and society, IKIGAI will guide our way while helping and nurturing ourselves and others in which ever perspective role they may have in our lives.

Leading with clear IKIGAI values can bring a big impact even with the smallest contribution and will help change our world for the better. It is one of the ways to build a healthy and lasting ecosystem in our lives within this universe.

**Marisa Meutia Kogovšek**



I'm AEIOU leader, because I want to promote multicultural dialog on international level according to the principles of Ubuntu concept of life.

**Ibrahim Nouhoum**



As a leader I want reawaken our capacity to love and bring this to the places we work and live. Love is an expression of deep connection to ourselves, each other and the natural environment.

**Stanley Nyoni**

If your heart is resonating with the thoughts of the members of the global community of AEIOU Leaders, you are cordially invited to join us.

The AEIOU Global Community of Leaders was given the Bronze Award for Social Innovation in June 2022.



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