# Women's Entrepreneurship Day

I'm the founder of **ALLCA**, a brand of digitally printed rugs, produced in handwoven recycled and recyclable polyester. My brand is a way to express myself by creating something beautiful, unique, special, and functional and doing it with my own values and beliefs.

I came from the illustration sector, and also from the fashion industry and I wanted to do things differently by combining my arts background with something that could be useful. I'm preserving tradition in the sense that carpets are weaved on ancestral looms. Innovation comes because the rugs are printed. This means that we're not using the toxic processes associated with dyeing: we directly move forward through digital printing, and this gives us a huge range of possibilities in terms of graphic design. So the combination of the ancestral loom with the digital printing machine is really interesting in terms of the final product, but also in terms of collaboration with graphic artists, designers and artisans.

With ALLCA, I won the Sustainable Maker Awards in 2020, an initiative organised by the British Council within their Circular Cultures programme. One of the things I value most about my participation in the programme is that the British Council believed in ALLCA even in its very early stages. Another crucial support was the creation of networks and contacts as well as mentoring because I was assigned to a professional who guided me throughout each stage of the project. The financial support was also important to produce and fund my first prototypes.

The piece of advice I'd give to any female entrepreneur is to face the lack of knowledge with humility and admit that there are things that you simply don't know. Share this lack of knowledge with others, try to learn and share your own processes even if they're not perfect or finished, ask for feedback and keep your strong beliefs while being open to advice and opinion.

**Haizea Najera, Spain**
Founder of ALLCA and Circular Cultures programme participant