



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

Women's Leadership Forum

Hilton Cleveland Downtown – Cleveland, OH

September 27-28, 2026

- Daily Schedule of Events -

Sunday, September 27

8:00 am – 8:30 am	Breakfast
8:30 am – 9:45 am	Opening Remarks and Leadership Panel <i>This panel will feature current leaders of A/E firms who will discuss not only the journey to running their firms, but also current obstacles and the direction they see the industry going</i>
9:45 am – 10:00 am	Break
10:00 am – 10:20 am	Sponsor Presentation <i>Mary Erchul, ACEC Business Insurance Trust</i>
10:20 am – 12:20 am	Leadership Workshop: Strategic Leadership and Career Navigation in High-Performance Environments <i>This workshop explores how professionals can strengthen their leadership influence and navigate career growth beyond technical expertise. Participants will consider practical strategies for building visibility, relationships, communication, and organizational influence while preparing for future leadership opportunities.</i> Laurie Foster, Foster Group Strategies
12:20 pm – 1:00 pm	Luncheon
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Open Roundtable Brainstorming and Discussions ○ <i>Strengthening leadership pipelines</i> ○ <i>Building more adaptive, inclusive, and high-performing firms</i> ○ <i>Retaining mid-career women</i> ○ <i>Making flexibility work in client-driven environments</i> ○ <i>Supporting emerging leaders</i>
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	Break

**The Women's Leadership Forum encourages open discussion, so exact topics and times are subject to change.*

2:15 pm – 4:15 pm

Navigating Menopause at Work

Menopause affects nearly half the workforce and can significantly influence employees' well-being and performance during critical career years. This session offers practical guidance for managing symptoms at work, supporting colleagues and employees, and creating workplace policies that promote retention and inclusion.

Dr. Victoria Verlezza, People & Culture Strategist

4:15 pm – 5:00 pm

Building the Leadership Bench: Workforce Development as a Firmwide Strategy

Examine how you can identify and prepare future leaders earlier, create more intentional career pathways, strengthen mentorship and sponsorship, and ensure that employees have access to the experiences, feedback, and visibility needed to advance.

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Opening Reception for All Forums

Monday, September 28

8:00 am – 8:30 am

Breakfast

8:30am – 10:30 am

Leadership Path: Sponsorship, Visibility, and Advancement

Hear from senior leaders and rising professionals as they discuss the difference between mentorship and sponsorship, creating visibility without self-promotion discomfort, the role of supervisors, principals, and executives, and how firms can make advancement pathways clearer.

9:30am – 9:45 am

Break

10:30 am – 11:00 am

Open Roundtable Discussions and Report Out

11:00 am

Forum Adjourns