



**Ms. Sophia Bekele Eshete** is a widely acknowledged business leader, international entrepreneur, corporate governance expert, global policy advisor, public engagement specialist, activist and philanthropist, whose wide-ranging experience spans both the public & private sectors.

Bekele is well-known as a global technology and internet authority. Noting all her major contributions in her field, CIO East Africa in 2017 named her "Industry Trailblazer" and "Internet Governance Pioneer". In 2013, she was named one of the "Two Leading ladies" in Africa's ICT sector and "African Women to Watch" by Bloomberg TV, recognizing women as "most fearless, competitive and visionary African women of our time and "the women working hard to close the gender gap and shaping the continent's social, political and economic landscape". Also in 2014, she was named "Top 20 Inspirational African Diaspora Professional Women in Europe" by ADIPWE for her work in technology transfer from the west where she was educated and worked to Africa. In 2013, she was recognized as one of the "50 African Trailblazers – a Future Made in Africa" by the NewAfrican Magazine noting all her accomplishments including for organizing and leading the wildly acclaimed and successful 6-year Yes2DotAfrica multi-lingual global awareness campaign for the ".africa" Internet domain name.

Bekele is a frequently published writer and commentator on industry and political media, on current affairs issues of technology, Internet governance, business and cyber - security. She is invited to speak on her work at many local and international conferences as well as to deliver keynote speeches and moderate high-level panels. Bekele has also served on various senior-level policy advisory & leadership boards at national and international levels including the United Nations and ICANN where her work has made positive impact on the implementation of key public policies.

Ms. Bekele is vastly specialized in the Internet governance terrain where she has accomplished impactful work on internet policy and governance, including championing policy for International Domain Names (IDNs) on behalf of global language constituency. She has also performed high-level public engagements and policy advocacy at the level of US Congress and the African private sector.

Bekele holds an MBA in Management of Information Systems (MIS) from Golden Gate University and a Bachelor of Science in Business Analysis & Computer Systems (BACS) from San Francisco State University. She holds various professional certifications of competency in the fields of IT & Security Auditing, Control Systems, Governance of Enterprise Systems and Infrastructures such as CISA, CCS, and CGEIT.

Early in her career, as a Corporate Executive, Bekele achieved a successful track record working for different Fortune 500 Companies in the field of Business & IT, & Systems Security Auditing and Risk Management & Enterprise systems. She has continued to draw on this background in her current professional engagements. Bekele is a strong advocate of accountability and transparency improvements in all facets of her engagements & holding public authorities to such high standards.

As an Entrepreneur, Bekele has founded and run various international start-ups, implementing successful projects in Africa as well as launching early stage US companies into new markets. Her US company has also been engaged in corporate governance & communications, as well as venture capital and business

modeling activities. In the past years, Bekele also founded the DotConnectAfrica (DCA) Group, an African based organization she set up to initiate the “.africa” Internet Domain name & Internet Policy public engagement, ICT knowledge generation & management, Internet domain registry services in new media & gender-focused women & youth empowerment social entrepreneurship programs that offers seed fund and business incubation in Africa. Through this, and her personal ‘Sophia Bekele Scholarship Foundation’, Bekele also demonstrates her long-standing commitment to giving back to the community by engaging in different philanthropic activities.

Bekele is the Chief Convener of the Internet Business Council for Africa (IBCA), an industry group that represents the African private sector in Global Internet Governance & ICT matters and Chairwoman of GEDA Investment Group a pan-African initiative with interest in strategic sector of Africa’s economy, currently heavily vested in technology, Financial, Media and Real Estate sectors.

Bekele has traveled to over 140 countries and is currently working on a book on her business experiences in Africa. Her full bio is available at [www.sophiabekele.com](http://www.sophiabekele.com)