



Aoife Matthews

Sisterly

GOING FOR GROWTH PROFILE

NAME:

Aoife Matthews

BUSINESS SISTERLY

POSITION Co-founder

WHAT WE DO

A wellness company developing science-led supplements for women's health

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After years building a career in finance and energy, Aoife Matthews is now focused on a very different challenge: simplifying the confusing world of supplements for women.

The Dubliner spent much of her career living and working in London, Santiago and Madrid before forming SISTERLY, a wellness company developing science-led supplements for women's health, in 2020 alongside friends Jennifer O'Connell and Louise O'Riordan.

"The whole supplement space is incredibly confusing and overwhelming. Women are taking multiple products related to different aspects of their health. We realised there was a real gap in the market for a single product, backed by science, that supports energy, hormonal balance, immunity, beauty, and more," she says.

In September 2023, the business launched its first product, The Elevator – a daily supplement delivered in a single sachet designed to replace multiple vitamins and supplements.

The reaction from buyers has been strong, with the company seeing rapid growth through online sales and word-of-mouth recommendations. "It took almost three years of research and development to get the formulation right. We wanted to create something that was genuinely evidence based. We've been really encouraged by the response. Women try it and often start recommending it to friends," she says.

"Women are busy – work, families, ageing parents – so we wanted to create something that simplifies things. If we can make it easier for women to support their health every day, that's a great place to start."

Ireland remains a key market – high-profile supporters include Irish Olympic sailor Annalise Murphy and athletics legend Sonia O'Sullivan – but Aoife and her co-founders are aiming to build on their burgeoning international presence. They have seen very strong growth in the UK recently and have just launched with a leading online pharmacy chain in the US.

"We're predominantly a subscription brand but we have a few select retail partners. In Ireland, we work with Brown Thomas and Meagher's Pharmacy. In the UK, we work with Harrods and John Bell & Croydon, known as the Queen's Pharmacy," she says.

They also just launched The Booster, a supplement specifically designed for women who are pregnant and breastfeeding.

Like many first-time founders, she found the transition from corporate life to entrepreneurship challenging – particularly when navigating areas such as company formation, funding and scaling a new venture. That led her to participate on the Starting Strong programme.

"Starting Strong came at the perfect time for SISTERLY. Having been on the market for only six months, it provided the opportunity and framework to take a step back from the day to day and focus on the longer term plan for the business. The programme covered big picture issues such as strategy and goals, but also practical areas, crucial for a growing business such as recruitment, finance, and pricing. We had huge learnings from our Lead Entrepreneur and the rest of the group."

"Entrepreneurship can feel quite isolating at times, especially in the early stages," she says. "Having a group of people you can learn from makes a huge difference."

SISTERLY



Manverton