

Haben Girma

Innovator, and WHO Commissioner on Social Connection

"Pioneering leader transforming barriers into breakthroughs"

The first Deafblind person to graduate from Harvard Law School, Haben Girma is an award-winning advocate, author, and keynote speaker. She received the Helen Keller Achievement Award, was honoured by President Obama as a Champion of Change, the French Ministry of Culture appointed her a Knight of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, and the World Health Organization selected her as an inaugural Commissioner for its Commission on Social Connection.

TOPICS:

- Turning Barriers into Breakthroughs
- Gaining the Innovation Advantage
- Human Connection in the Age of AI
- Accessibility: A Conversation with Haben Girma

LANGUAGES:

She presents in English.

PUBLICATIONS:

2019 Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law

IN DETAIL:

The New York Times praised her bestselling book Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law. She demonstrates how constraints fuel innovation, crafting non-visual techniques for everything from dancing salsa to climbing an iceberg in Alaska. Her ingenuity led her to develop a speech-to-Braille communication system, opening a powerful new channel for Deafblind communication. Her captivating voice, infused with warmth and humor, encourages audiences to transform barriers into opportunities for growth. Organisations such as Apple, Bottega Veneta, Disney, Gartner, Google, Microsoft, Oxford University, and Visa have invited her to deliver keynote presentations. TIME included her in TIME100 Talks.In 2026 Haben was appointed Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters in France.

WHAT SHE OFFERS YOU:

As a Deafblind woman navigating a sighted-hearing world, Haben created inventive ways to communicate, collaborate, and move through everyday life. The same resourcefulness has fueled breakthroughs throughout history. Research from Accenture shows that companies prioritising accessibility often outperform their competitors. The global accessibility market—disabled people and their communities purchasing accessible products and services—is worth more than $13 trillion annually. In her engaging presentations, Haben teaches audiences how to transform barriers into breakthroughs, strengthen organizations, and tap into one of the largest markets.

HOW SHE PRESENTS:

Haben exudes magnetic energy, captivating hearts and minds effortlessly. Her engaging presentations ignite audiences to make positive changes in their communities.