



Women in Tech Conference

CURATED BY
 Women in Business
a part of  The WIB Group

SPONSORED BY
 MCSGROUP
INTELLIGENT RECRUITMENT SOLUTIONS

Friday 7 February | 8:30am-3:45pm | Titanic Belfast

Event Information

Welcome to the **8th Women in Tech Conference** taking place at Titanic Belfast on Friday 7th February 2025.

This empowering event, sponsored by **MCS Group**, will gather trailblazers who innovate, push boundaries, and embrace technology. From inspirational women who have achieved great success within the sector, to influential entrepreneurs who will share their journeys throughout the world of Tech.

The day will be filled with a range of speakers and panellists, providing attendees with industry-focused learning and face to face access to a high calibre of professional and personal development experts, exploring the conference theme of **Women Transforming Tech: Talent, Ambition and Inclusion in Action**.



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Conference Programme

- 08.30 Arrival & Networking
- 09.30 Welcome from conference host, **Babita Sharma**
- 09.35 Sponsor message from **Mairead Scott, Managing Director, MCS Group**
- 09.45 **Opening Speaker - Lorna McAdoo, ESG Group Director, Version 1**
Why inclusion matters
- 10.05 **Panel discussion - Pathways to Growth: Supporting Early Careers and Retaining Talent in Tech**
This panel will discuss strategies for attracting talent, fostering mentorship and creating supportive pathways for women to thrive and stay in tech.
 - Mairead Scott, MCS Group
 - Deena Robinson, EOS IT Solutions
 - Diana Atchison, Belfast Met
 - Catherine McCourt, Aflac
- 10.50 Mid-morning refreshments break with networking
- 11.20 **A mindful moment - unplug and recharge with Bridgeen Rea-Kaya**
- 11.35 **Speaker - Clare McGrath, Creative Digital Technology Leader, St. Malachy's College Belfast and 2024 Women in Business Outstanding Woman in Tech Award Winner**
Leading tech transformation through education
- 12.05 **Session 1- Professional development breakout sessions**
50 min sessions - each delegate chooses two sessions to attend
Session 1: 12.10 - 13.00 and Session 2: 13.50 - 14.40



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Topic 1 – Thrive for Life (located on the Bridge)

- Dr Aisling Gough, Healthy Little Lifter - Women's health coach and menopause specialist will be taking a session on the key pillars of health to help you perform at your best.

Topic 2 – Presenting with impact (located in the Britannic Suite)

- Camilla Long, Bespoke Communications - At this session learn techniques to communicate with confidence and deliver memorable presentations that leave a lasting impression.

Topic 3 – Panel discussion – AI for Good: Creating impact through purpose-driven AI (located in the Titanic Suite)

- Rosemary J Thomas, Version 1
- Elena Kamenou, Rapid 7
- Adrianne Thompson, QUB
- Susan Stewart, Allstate Northern Ireland

13.00 Lunch

13.50 Session 2 - Professional development breakout sessions - (repeated as above)

14.40 Welcome Back - Babita Sharma

14:45 Panel Discussion - Celebrating Unique Strengths: Neurodiversity and Nurturing Difference in the Tech Workplace

This panel will focus on neurodiversity as a super power and strategies for creating inclusive work environments that recognize neurodiverse strengths, provide tailored growth opportunities and support difference.

- Cheryl McIntyre, Microsoft UK
- Jonathan McMurray, Microsoft UK
- David Crozier, AI Collaboration Centre Ulster University
- Edel Martin, Pytilia

15:45 Conference Close and Announcement of Women in Tech Awards 2025, Lorraine Acheson, Managing Director, Women in Business NI



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Joining us will be:

Conference Host - Babita Sharma

Babita is a distinguished broadcaster, journalist, and award-winning author with over 15 years of experience at the BBC. As Chief News Presenter, she has reported on major global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 U.S. elections, and the Black Lives Matter protests, earning the Asian Achievement Award. Her acclaimed book *The Corner Shop* explores the social history of Britain's corner shops, inspired by her childhood in 1980s Britain. The book won a Business Book Award and was featured on BBC Radio Four and BBC Two's *Between the Covers* Book Club. A leading voice on multicultural Britain, Babita has delivered a TED Talk on immigration and presented documentaries like *Dangerous Borders: The Story of India & Pakistan*, retracing her family's journey 70 years after Partition. She chairs high-profile events, including the UN World Investment Forum, COP 27, and the World AI Summit. Committed to diversity and mental health advocacy, Babita mentors BAME journalists and serves as a Trustee for United for Global Mental Health and Crescent Arts Northern Ireland. She is also a Patron of the South Asian Heritage Trust and Migration Museum UK. Babita is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Poetry at Queen's University Belfast.



Speaker

Lorna McAdoo

Lorna is a Director at Version 1, a global IT services provider. Since joining in 2013, she has grown the Belfast operation to over 560 people, delivering 30% year-on-year revenue growth and providing services to local and international clients. Lorna also leads the organisation's environmental, social, and governance (ESG) strategy, driving diversity, community engagement, and employability initiatives within the tech sector. Her accolades include being named one of Europe's Top 25 Women Leaders in Software (2021) and Digital DNA's Business Personality of the Year (2022), alongside multiple leadership and company excellence awards. With a career spanning prominent technology organisations, Lorna is committed to fostering innovation, building strong teams, and inspiring the next generation in the tech industry.



Panel 1 - Pathways to Growth: Supporting Early Careers and Retaining Talent in Tech

Mairead Scott

Mairead, a highly respected professional in the recruitment industry, has over 25 years of experience in delivering top-tier recruitment solutions in Northern Ireland's private and public sectors. She launched MCS Group's Professional Services division in 2015, offering tailored recruitment solutions in Accountancy & Finance, Sales & Marketing, and Legal. Mairead founded Honeycomb Jobs, a leading provider of business support and administrative recruitment services. Appointed Managing Director in January 2024, Mairead leads strategic growth into new markets, solidifying MCS Group's position as a leading specialist recruitment agency.



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Deena Robinson



Deena is the People and Culture Director at EOS IT Solutions, a global company headquartered in Banbridge, joining the organisation a year ago. With over 30 years of experience, Deena has honed her expertise in Industrial Relations, Learning and Development, Organisational Design & Development, and leading complex Transformation and Change initiatives. Before her current role, she held prominent national-level positions in the retail sector with leading brands such as Sainsbury's, Homebase, and Coop. A certified Workplace Mediator and a Business Coach, Deena is deeply committed to fostering collaboration, innovation, and sustainable growth through strategic people practices.

Diana Atchison



Diana is the Centre for Digital Innovation and Technology (CDIT) Project Manager at Belfast Metropolitan College. Diana is responsible for delivering Bring IT On as well as Digital Skills Academies. Bring IT On is a programme to educate young people, their parents, and teachers on careers in IT. Digital Skills Academies are designed to connect learners with opportunities to enhance employment and digital skills. Diana has over 15 years' experience working within the software development and consultancy industries. Throughout her career Diana has implemented tech enabled digital change projects into multi-national businesses and government departments.

Catherine McCourt



Catherine McCourt is the director of engineering at Aflac NI, an American supplemental health care insurance company that established their Technology Centre of Excellence business in Belfast just over 5 years ago. For the past 4 years Catherine has been responsible for Aflac NI's Automation & Workflow engineering practice, employing 35 staff. Prior to joining Aflac Catherine worked at Citi for 15 years starting off as an application support engineer for a mainframe system, and ultimately becoming responsible for production application support for global custody and direct custody in EMEA, APAC and North America, leading a team of over 60 staff around the world.

Speaker

Bridgeen Rea-Kaya



Bridgeen will bring some mindfulness into your day. We will explore the science and benefits of stopping and pausing including the impact on your productivity and relationships at work and balance in your home life. Equipping you with practical skills to take away and use in everyday life. Bridgeen is a pioneer of mindfulness and mindful self-compassion based in Northern Ireland. She has a Masters in Mindfulness Based Approaches (Msc) from Bangor University, Wales and is an accredited and trained Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) Teacher and a qualified yoga teacher (YFNI).



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Speaker

Clare McGrath



Clare is an award-winning educator and the Creative Digital Technology Leader at St Malachy's College, Belfast. With over a decade of teaching experience, Clare spearheaded the launch of the school's state-of-the-art digital hub in 2022, designed to upskill both students and teachers in cutting-edge technologies. Under her leadership, the hub has become a collaborative space for pupils from across North Belfast, offering hands-on learning in coding, robotics, virtual reality, and more. Clare's forward-thinking approach addresses Northern Ireland's digital skills gap by equipping the next generation with tools for a tech-driven future. In recognition of her impact, Clare was named Outstanding Woman in Tech 2024 at the Women in Tech Awards, celebrating her dedication to innovation and education. Her work continues to inspire collaboration across schools and empower young minds to embrace creative problem-solving and digital innovation.

Breakout Sessions

Topic 1

Dr Aisling Gough



Recognised online as Healthy Little Lifter, Aisling has amassed a loyal international following through her health and wellness content. A nutritionist, trainer and qualified menopause specialist, her approachable informative style with easily implemented tips, has made her a go-to source. Her work with menopausal women, has earned a reputation for excellence, resulting in her winning the "Influential Woman of the Year for Outstanding Contribution to Health", Ulster Tatler Award in June 2024. Aisling's wealth of knowledge and expertise will provide invaluable action steps you can implement to improve your own personal wellbeing.

Topic 2

Camilla Long



Camilla is an expert in Leadership Communication and Organisational Culture, and co-founder of leading training and professional development company, Bespoke Communications. Camilla's expertise has been recognised with multiple speaker awards, cementing her status as a thought leader in her field. She is a featured speaker at leading conferences and corporate events, helping people to speak authentically for impact and influence.



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Panel discussion – AI for Good: Creating impact through purpose-driven AI

Rosemary J Thomas



Rosemary is a Senior Technical Researcher within the Version 1 AI Labs - a team that explores cutting-edge technologies in AI across sectors, services, and technologies. Rosemary holds a PhD in Computing Sciences from the University of Aberdeen, where she developed and tested ArguMessage, a system for generating persuasive messages based on argumentation schemes. Her previous roles include Senior UX Researcher at Verizon Connect Ireland Limited, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at University College Dublin, and R&D Analyst at Queen's University Belfast and the University of Aberdeen. She has published several papers in the fields of Human-Centred Artificial Intelligence, argumentation, and behaviour change. Rosemary is also an avid AI blogger for Version 1, with her work featured in Technology Dispatch, Digitalisation World, Process & Control, and more.

Eleni Kamenou



Eleni is a Senior AI Engineer at Rapid7, specializing in using AI to enhance Managed Detection and Response (MDR) services and improve cybersecurity operations. She develops AI solutions to help security teams detect, respond to, and mitigate threats more effectively. With a strong academic background in AI research, including NLP, computer vision, and generative AI, Eleni focuses on the security and trustworthiness of AI models. She has an extensive portfolio of research publications and contributions to international conferences, offering valuable insights into AI's role in cybersecurity.

Adrienne Thompson



Adrienne Thompson is an early career Computer Science researcher at QUB's Centre for Secure Information Technologies (CSIT), investigating how Internet-connected devices can facilitate abuse against victims of intimate partner violence. Her work involves identifying technical security and privacy risks, analysing patterns of digital abuse, and developing strategies to prevent the misuse of technology. This research aims to protect vulnerable individuals from tech-enabled harassment, raise awareness, and create safer digital spaces for everyone. Through her work, she hopes to make a positive impact on both technology and society—especially survivors of intimate partner violence.

Susan Stewart



Susan is a Digital Product Manager at Allstate NI, with over 10 years of expertise in the IT industry from consulting to data and analytics. Her product is the first employee facing app in Allstate's Claims area to adopt large scale use of AI and has been instrumental in improving the quality of ~20M outbound communications to customers in 2024.



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Panel discussion – Celebrating Unique Strengths: Neurodiversity and Nurturing Difference in the Tech Workplace



Cheryl McIntyre

Cheryl is a Technology Application Development Consultant at Microsoft UK. They have worked on major development projects across Europe, including Mercedes Benz and the Met Office. With no prior technical background, they participated in the Assured Skills Academy for Microsoft and acquired all their technical skills on the job. Cheryl has been with Microsoft for 3 years and previously worked in Tourism in Northern Ireland at places such as Titanic Belfast and the Giant's Causeway.



Jonathan McMurray

Jonathan is a Data & AI Consultant at Microsoft. With a diverse and multifaceted career behind him, Jonathan is passionate about modern workplace reform and championing best practices for neurodiverse employees, drawing from his own experiences. As a father of two sons and someone diagnosed with ASC, he is dedicated to creating more inclusive environments.



David Crozier

David is Director of the £16.3m Artificial Intelligence Collaboration Centre (AICC), a joint venture between Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast. Previously he was CEO of Software NI, representing the £1.7 billion software industry having spent over a decade at QUB's Centre for Secure Information Technologies (CSIT) as Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement. He was appointed to the DSIT (previously DCMS) College of Experts in 2021, the NI Cyber Security Steering Group in 2018 and was, until recently, Chair of SpecialisterneNI. He was awarded a CBE in the 2024 New Year's Honours List for services to the economy.



Edel Martin

Edel is Head of Development at Pytilia, a fast-growing Northern Ireland-based software solutions company with an international customer base including some of the biggest names in IT worldwide. Throughout her career, Edel has led the successful delivery of numerous customer projects, building diverse & inclusive teams in both corporate and startup environments. At Pytilia's core is an emphasis on wellbeing, inclusivity and giving back or what we call "Heart & Soul". As Head of Development, Edel is instrumental in achieving these goals, fostering an environment where team members from all backgrounds are supported to achieve their full potential.



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Venue

The conference will take place in the Titanic Belfast. Registration will take place in the Atrium, after collecting your name badge, please proceed to the Titanic Suite on the 5th floor of the venue where welcome catering will be available.

Car Parking

Car parking is widely available in the underground car park at Titanic Belfast. There are 520 secure, underground paid parking spaces available. Please note car parking charges are the responsibility of delegates.

Photography/Videography

Please note there will be photography/videography during the event. If you wish to be excluded please let one of the onsite team know.

Social Media

Throughout the event we will be encouraging delegates to interact on social media. Please tag us on Twitter: @wibni | Instagram: @womeninbusinessni | Facebook: @womeninbusinessni | LinkedIn: @womeninbusinessni

Event Contact Information

We look forward to welcoming you on Friday 7th February. If you are no longer able to attend, please advise the event team at your earliest convenience, emails should be sent to wib@plannd.co.uk.

Should you require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact the event team.

