Women in tech to watch in 2020

In the UK, women represent only 17% of the digital workforce. Which is worrying considering how critical the industry is both today and for the future. To champion the women that are leading initiatives aiming to address this imbalance, we are delighted to share our selection of the most influential women in tech of 2020.

Debbie Forster, CEO of Tech Talent Charter

Initially Co-Founder and then CEO, Debbie leads the award-winning industry collective Tech Talent Charter, a non-profit created in 2015 with the aim of delivering a more diverse workforce in the world of tech and supported by the government.

A former English teacher, Debbie has been working in the tech sector for ten years as co-CEO at Apps for Good and e-skills UK. In 2017, she received an MBE for digital innovation and recognised as WISE Woman of the Year in 2016.

Discover Tech Talent Charter

Dr. Anne-Marie Imafidon, Co-Founder and CEO of Stemettes

In 2013, <u>Anne-Marie</u> founded the organisation "Stemettes" to encourage young and ambitious women towards <u>careers in science</u>, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). She's a board member at several companies and organisations in art and STEM industries.

In addition to this, she created the Evening Standard's Women Tech Charge podcast and was awarded an MBE in 2017 for her services to STEM. She's also a trustee of the Institute for the Future of Work.

<u>Discover Stemettes</u>

Alice Bentinck, Co-Founder of Entrepreneur First

Alice co-founded Entrepreneur First to bring together extraordinary people to create startups in London and Singapore.

Entrepreneur First aims to fund individuals and help them build cofounding teams, develop ideas, and accelerate through fundraising. Alice also co-founded <u>Code First: Girls</u>, an organisation providing coding courses across universities for girls and women in tech.

<u>Discover Entrepreneur First</u>

Sarah Wilkinson, CEO of NHS Digital

In 2017, <u>Sarah</u> was appointed CEO of NHS Digital. Previously, she was a CTO at the Home Office, where she led many of the IT systems supporting UK borders and policing. Before working in the public sector, Sarah worked in the finance industry as a Managing Director and Head of Corporate Systems Technology at Credit Suisse, as well as various IT roles at HSBC and Deutsche Bank.

Sarah has received multiple awards, has appeared on the Top 50 Most

Influential Women in IT and was recognised as U.K. Chief Digital Officer of the Year.

Priya Guha, Council Member at Innovate UK and Venture Partner at Merian Ventures

Last year, Priya became Venture Partner at Merian Ventures after being General Manager for the London co-working space RocketSpace. At the end of 2018, she became chair of the board of trustees Modern Muse, a digital platform aiming to inform girls about possible career choices.

Priya is also an active advisor at both Tech London Advocates and Big Youth Group, as well as a Council Member for InnovateUK, and an ambassador for London Tech Week 2019.

Carrie Anne Philbin, Director of Education at Raspberry Pi Foundation

Carrie Anne has many responsibilities within the Raspberry Pi Foundation. Her role is to lead strategy, professional development programmes and learning resources, to make computer science more accessible for everyone including women in tech.

She's also the host of a Computer Science series on an educational YouTube channel CrashCourse, and the author of *Adventures in Raspberry Pi*, a computing book for teenagers wanting to get started with Raspberry Pi and programming. In 2014, she won the Technology & Innovation Best Author award.

Rioch Edwards-Brown, Founder of So You Wanna Be In Tech?

Rioch is the founder of non-profit So You Wanna Be on TV? and an advocate for diversity with a 20-year expertise in media. In 2016, she launched So You Wanna Be in Tech? based on her first show. Initially, she began So You Wanna Be on TV? as a community programme after her son was shot and stabbed at school. She uses the platform to tackle the lack of diversity in TV by providing free employability skills through partnerships between TV companies, brands, corporates and the local community.

In 2018, Rioch was part of the 50 Most Influential Women In UK Tech. In 2015, she was voted Hero of the Year at the European Diversity Awards.

Discover So You Wanna Be On TV?

Hayaatun Sillem, CEO of the Royal Academy of Engineering

Before being appointed CEO in 2018, Hayaatun held different roles at the Royal Academy of Engineering: as CEO and Director of Strategy, Director of Programmes and Fellowship, and Head of International Activities.

She's also the commissioner and chair for Made Smarter UK, chair of judges for the St Andrews Prize for the Environment, and a trustee of Engineering UK.

Discover the Royal Academy of Engineering

Marija Butkovic, Founder and CEO of Women of Wearables

In 2016, Marija created Women of Wearables to support, connect and mentor women in tech and diverse groups specifically in wearable tech, fashion tech, health tech and IoT. Headquartered in London with over 20,000 members worldwide, WoW has become a global movement that supports its growing

community through events, mentorship, educational programs and collaboration with local ambassadors and partners.

In 2017, 2018 and 2019, Marija was selected as one of the Most Influential Women in UK tech by Computer Weekly. She's part of the Top 100 Influencers on Gender Equality and Diversity and Top STEM Entrepreneurs by Onalytica.

Discover Women of Wearables

Magdalena Krön, Co-Founder of Geek Girl Meetup UK

As well as leading Rise London for Barclays, connecting the bank with fintech companies, Magdalena co-founded Geek Girl Meetup. Geek Girl Meetup is a community of women in tech and design startups. With monthly events and a yearly conference, the network connects women and offers opportunities, insight and inspiration.

Prior to joining Barclays, Magdalena led operations and investments at Capital List and the London Co-Investment Fund supporting over 300 startups with their early-stage business strategies.

Discover Geek Girl MeetUp

Dame Stephanie Shirley, IT pioneer, Businesswoman and Philanthropist

In 1939, Stephanie Shirley (or "Steve Shirley") arrived in Britain as a child refugee before starting a business that became Xansa plc (now part of the Sopra Group) on her dining room table. As Chief Executive, she developed the company into a leading business technology group, pioneering new work practices and changing the position of women in tech.

When her autistic son Giles died at 35 in 1998, she started focusing on IT and autism and founded the Shirley Foundation. Her charity has given over £67m in grants and initiated projects that are pioneering by nature, strategic in impact and significant in money terms.

In June 2017, she was awarded by the Order of Companions of Honour in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

Read also

[Most innovative wearable tech of 2019](#)

Alison Rose, CEO of RBS

With the recent announcement that RBS, via Natwest will be investing £1 billion to support female entrepreneurs in the UK to scale and grow, Alison is going to continue to make headlines. The goal is to support and inspire 500K people to consider starting a business – of whom at least 60% will be female – and to help create at least 50k new businesses by 2023.

This significant funding is a tremendous step forward and demonstrates the finance sector's commitment to promote female entrepreneurship in the United Kingdom.

Prof. Sue Black, Professor of Computer Science and Technology Evangelist, Durham University

Named one of Forbes World #Top50 Women in Tech in 2018 Professor Sue Black OBE is an inspiring, multi award-winning computer scientist, radical thinker, passionate social entrepreneur, keynote speaker and author.

She sits on a number of different and diverse boards including the UK Government Digital Service, the Fawcett Society Commission of Gender Stereotypes and Comic Relief – a major UK charity, with the vision of a just

world, free from poverty.

She is an inspiring champion for women in technology being the founder of BCSWomen the UK's first online network for women in tech, and #techmums, a social enterprise which empower mums and their families through tech.

Discover Durham University

Camilla Richards, Partner and Head of Investor Relations at Atomico

Camilla is Partner and Head of Investor Relations at Atomico based in London. She oversees fundraising and the firm's relationships with its investors worldwide. Before joining Atomico, Camilla spent six years at Apollo Management where she was most recently responsible for investor relations and fundraising for European Principal Finance Funds.

Discover Atomico

Anne M. Glover, CEO at Amadeus Capital Partners Limited

Anne is CEO and co-founder of Amadeus Capital Partners, a venture capital firm that invests in European high-technology companies. Anne is also a member of the UK Government's Council for Science and Technology and the London Business School's Private Equity Institute Advisory Board.

Discover Amadeus Capital

Itxaso del Palacio, Investment Director

at Notion VC

Itxaso is an Investment Director at <u>Notion</u>, a VC firm investing in European SaaS and enterprise tech. She joined Notion in 2018 from M12 (formerly Microsoft Ventures) where she launched their UK office and led investments in Onfido, Beamery and Unbabel.

<u>Discover Notion VC</u>

Lillian Li, co-founder of Diversity VC and investor at Eight Roads

Lilian Li is a co-founder of <u>Diversity VC</u>, a non-profit group made up of interested individuals working in venture capital, who seek to increase the diversity of thought in the venture industry. She is also an investor at <u>Eight Roads Ventures</u>, a global venture capital firm that helps entrepreneurs scale.

<u>Discover Eight Roads</u>

Nadine Torbey, Investor at AlbionVC

Nadine is an Investor at <u>Albion VC</u> investing from seed to Series B in high growth companies, with a focus on B2B software and tech enabled services in the UK. Nadine joined the tech investment team from Berytech Fund Management, one of the first VC funds in the Middle East. Her investment career to date has involved big data management, virtual reality, IoT, digital networks and hardware.

<u>Discover AlbionVC</u>

For further reading discover *<u>The Empowering Guide for Women in Tech in 2022</u>* by *<u>Jennifer Gregory.</u>*