

Women In Business Magazine



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SPRING
2022



Women in Business Awards celebrate 10th Anniversary

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Chair's Message

Nichola Robinson,
Director Strategic Sourcing, Spirit AeroSystems



It is encouraging to see such a positive start to 2022 for Women in Business. As we enter our 20th anniversary of the network, we aim to continue the fantastic efforts and achievements of our members and women in the workplace across Northern Ireland – helping to create a new economy for the next two decades ahead, whereby women significantly continue to contribute to the economic success of society.

Reflecting on recent months, we began to find our way in the working world again as we returned to in person events and conferences. The Voices of Leadership conference in Killeavy Castle kick started our esteemed Women in Business events as we came together to remind each other that it is 'Mother' Nature for a reason, and the remarkable work that can be done when we work together as one – not forgetting the support of our male allies. The team at WIB continued to support our 6000+ members with online events and programmes, connecting likeminded women throughout their

industries and beyond to nurture both professional and personal development.

We welcome a wide range of Corporate and Group members to the network for the exciting year ahead - Schroders Personal Wealth, Newry Mourne & Down District Council, Camlin Group, Labour Relations Agency, B-Secur, Kinsetu, Shoosmiths, Younique Aesthetics, Wilson Nesbitt, Workers Pension Trust and Dowd's Group. With a growing membership, we are delighted to have new staff members join the Women in Business team, alongside three new partners for the network: Amazon, MCS Group and FinTrU. Including a renewed 3-year partnership with our Key Partners at Allstate Northern Ireland.

This year, Women in Business have continued to support women in the growing Tech sector of Northern Ireland. From the 19 graduates of the Press Refresh Data Analytics programme to the inspiring efforts of transforming tech together at the 5th Women in Tech Conference. As we plan to celebrate the women who innovate, challenge, and embrace technology with the inaugural Women in Tech Awards in Spring 2022.

Momentous milestones have been reached throughout the

network. In particular, the 10th Anniversary of the Women in Business Awards, acknowledging the hard work and achievements of some of the most successful, entrepreneurial, and inspiring businesswomen throughout Northern Ireland. Read more on page 19.

After 3 successful years, the Yes You Can female enterprise programme has come to an end. Women in Business are committed to developing and supporting female entrepreneurs in the year ahead as a critical component for the economic prosperity of Northern Ireland. A committal that Women in Business has taken through the recent collaboration with Techstart Ventures, as we secured £200,000 in prize business grants for female entrepreneurs. More information on page 4.

We look forward to a promising 2022 for the network and to join our members and friends on their journey of learning and growth with Women in Business.

Work to live

Great opportunities await

- ✓ Inclusive workplace
- ✓ Hybrid & flexible working
- ✓ Career progression
- ✓ Learning and development
- ✓ Volunteering opportunities
- ✓ Work/life balance
- ✓ Recognition program

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Female Start Ups Land £200k Funding for New Business Ideas

Six women-led start-ups are to share £200,000 in prize business grants as part of a Female Founders competition delivered by Women in Business in partnership with Techstart Ventures.

The female-focused initiative, which received over 50 applications, welcomed pioneering projects from right across the broad spectrum of

Northern Ireland's business community, as prize-winning ideas ranged from MedTech to baby products and virtual reality. It comes at a time of significant growth for female entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland, with the Rose Review Progress Report revealing that over 1,500 companies were established by women here in 2021, double the figure in 2018.

Lucy Baxter, whose enterprise Sensailence was

among the winning start-ups, commented:

"It's essential to celebrate and encourage women in the entrepreneurship space, a growing sector here. Crunchbase figures show that in 2020, just 2.4 per cent of global VC funding went to female founding teams and 5 per cent of VC partner roles were held by women; Techstart and Women in Business are helping to redress that balance."

"I'm passionate about the Createch sector, and our new enterprise Sensailence mixes my skills in cinematic VR filmmaking and my partner Elaine Bousfield's excellent track record in digital mental health. We're so excited to get going, and thanks so much to Techstart and Women in Business for giving us that opportunity!"

The Female Founders grant competition sought to support female entrepreneurs with a grant and business mentoring support directed towards exploring the viability and commercial potential of their innovative business idea. Kathleen Garrett, who heads up the Grant Fund within Techstart Ventures, stated: "It's so inspiring to see first-hand the innovation and ingenuity within NI's community of entrepreneurs. The calibre of entries to the competition was really impressive. Congratulations to the winners who we look forward to supporting on their journey to success."

Roseann Kelly, Chief Executive of Women in Business, added: "We're thrilled to announce the deserving winners of our Female Founders grant competition. Thanks to our partnership with Techstart Ventures, we have an opportunity to empower female entrepreneurship right here on our doorstep."

"After more than 170 women attended the information session on female funding, it's clear there is a real appetite here for female entrepreneurship. By accelerating the next generation of female-fronted start-ups, we can kindle a female enterprise ecosystem in Northern Ireland that has a positive ripple effect across society and the local economy for many more years to come. A massive 'well done' to all the winners."



Women in Business and MCS Group drive opportunities for females across Northern Ireland

Women in Business NI and MCS Group have announced a new three-year partnership to further drive opportunities for female business leaders and entrepreneurs across Northern Ireland.

Roseann Kelly, Chief Executive of Women in Business, said: "We're delighted to partner with MCS Group, which will

enable us to further build on our collaboration for NI's Women in Tech conference. Over the past five years, we've seen first-hand the cultural challenges that exist around attracting and indeed retaining female leaders, and we see this partnership as an exciting step towards overcoming those longstanding barriers."

Louise Smyth, Commercial Director of MCS Group, added: "By working more closely with Women in Business, we can look to seize the once in a generation opportunity to redress the gender imbalance in a working world that has changed forever."

It certainly is an exciting time ahead for the new partnership - watch this space!



Connection & Relationships

the building blocks of good business

From Lorraine Acheson,
Managing Director of
Women in Business



Human connection has never been more important to me. As we emerge into Spring and from two years of Covid restrictions, where we have been separated via screens, masks and distance, we are faced with the opportunity to rekindle old friendships, discover new relationships and perhaps remember who we are in 3D. But for many that also feels daunting and certainly for the introvert in me (not least the frenetic, sports-gear wearing, pony-tailed, no make-up me!) attending a virtual meeting feels easy, comfortable and to be honest - quick! And whilst I and many of my colleagues have become experts in virtual meetings and online networking over the last two years, it's true that there's an element of human connection is often missing. I find in face to face conversations it isn't just about the three work topics we need to cover, but also about how we're feeling, what's important in our lives and how we are managing to live alongside the huge challenges facing the world, whilst still - earn a living, cook dinner, care for relatives, study, look after our own health...In my new role I've found that when I meet people for the first time and it's face to face there is a deeper level of conversation and ultimately connection. And for me connection and relationships are the building blocks of good business.

In this edition of the Women in Business Magazine you'll see many pictures from face to face events we've held over recent months. The energy in the room at each of these events has taken me by surprise and it's been so motivating to hear women talk about how inspired they felt after connecting with new people and sharing experiences. Of course, there will always be a place for virtual events. At Women in Business we know virtual is a manageable and accessible way for many of our members

to attend events, reducing geographical barriers and also allowing women to catch up on content in their own time through our suite of recorded webinars. So I'm delighted to say that going forward our events will be both virtual and in person and we are keen to hear from you about what more you want to see.

Women in Business celebrates its 20 year anniversary this year. That's 20 years focused on creating a more inclusive economy by equipping women with the support, skills and networks they need to start and grow their own businesses and achieve success in their careers. As we celebrate this anniversary and as I bed into the new role of Managing Director, I invite you to CONNECT. Sign up for a course, attend a networking event, join the bookclub, remember why you joined Women in Business and see what happens when you meet other women and hear about their journeys - women who have a business idea but don't know where to start, women who are successful entrepreneurs, women flying high in a corporate career, women who are beginning a new career or working out what to do next. We have all been through so much these last two years and indeed some more than others, so if there was ever a time to feel the benefit of more connection, this is it.

Connect with
Lorraine on LinkedIn



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222b0129/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lorraine-acheson-222b0129/)

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Meet the team!

Our team has expanded over recent months, from newbies to the familiar faces, find out more about the women behind Women in Business – the driving force behind over 6000 members!



Roseann Kelly MBE
Chief Executive



[roseann@
womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:roseann@womeninbusinessni.com)

As we reach 20 years of Women in Business, Roseann has been a central figure to the network. Coming to the role of Chief Executive in 2009, she has overseen a period of rapid growth for the charity. In recognition of the commitment

and passionate work that she does to support women's contribution to the Northern Irish economy, Roseann was awarded an MBE as part of the New Years Honours 2020!



Lorraine Acheson
Managing Director



[Lorraine@
womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:Lorraine@womeninbusinessni.com)

Leading the way for Women in Business as our new Managing Director, Lorraine's 20 years of management experience spans across the UK and Australia. Lorraine believes that now is a time to celebrate female pioneers, who through

their innovation have radically advanced their business and wider fields, laying the foundations upon which others can build!



Maria McCaffrey
Programmes Co-Ordinator



[maria@
womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:maria@womeninbusinessni.com)

With over 15 years' experience in the hospitality and tourism, Maria joined the WIB team in December 2021. Having worked within the logistics industry, managing performance through data, Maria has received awards and recognitions for her exceptional service!

With her positive can-do attitude, she's passionate about helping everyone to achieve their full potential when it comes to professional development – with that in mind Maria is your point of contact for the Centre of Learning at Women in Business.



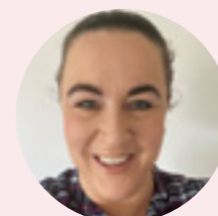
Margarita McNally
Marketing &
Membership Executive



[margarita@
womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:margarita@womeninbusinessni.com)

Margarita has been with the WIB team since 2020 in her first post-graduate role from her MSc Marketing at Queen's University. With a customer centric focus, Marguarita deals with all things marketing at WIB, from email to social media

marketing and everything in between! To make use of membership promotional opportunities, feel free to get in touch with Marguarita to help find the best option to available to you.



Gill Hughes
Operations and
Engagement Manager



[gill@
womeninbusinessni.com](mailto:gill@womeninbusinessni.com)

Having spent more than 20 years in customer facing roles, Gill has spent a significant part of her career in senior client management roles within the contact centre industry. For a change of scenery, she has spent the last few years managing a Holiday Park in Co. Down!

Whether she is hosting webinars or on the phone, Gill's bubbly personality and passion for delivering excellent customer service makes her the perfect fit as Membership Administration & Engagement Officer.



"Encouraging and supporting women to fulfil their potential in business is something that I'm passionate about"

DSP Hero Spotlight on Kerry-Anne Lawlor

Amazon UK Director Kerry-Anne supports small businesses and women in logistics

Kerry-Anne is one of those people who likes to roll up her sleeves and work things out herself. Her degree in engineering aided her journey towards several dynamic and flexible roles from project management to business development, but she was looking for a change in direction and joined Amazon as regional director, Amazon Logistics in 2017.

"What I liked was solving problems, being able to think differently and working with teams of amazing people. I spent most of my career in engineering."

Logistics wasn't necessarily something she had ever seen herself working in – a sentiment sadly shared by many women. But like a lot of roles she tackled in the past, it just came naturally. That same buzz and excitement of problem-solving and

operations was the ultimate attraction...

"It's fast-paced and changing, and you've got to react to customer needs. As the business grows, our teams and network of Delivery Service Partners grow with it."

Kerry-Anne discovered she had just the right blend of qualities it took to be successful in logistics. It was about developing motivated and inspired people, taking on new challenges and working around the clock to improve a customer-focused business.

Her story is reflective of Amazon's core commitment to diversity and bringing in more women leaders. While in the past, she may not have considered a role in logistics, she now runs a vast network of over 70 plus delivery stations. She is the UK Country Director

and with that, she supports the Amazon Logistics network to deliver against the Amazon Climate Pledge: a commitment to achieve net-zero carbon emissions across Amazon by 2040. Within the Amazon Logistics network in the UK there are more than 1,000 electric delivery vans on the road and last year more than 45 million packages were delivered by more sustainable transportation methods, such as electric vans or cargo bikes. The plan is to have 100,000 vehicles deployed world wide by 2030.

With Amazon committed to ensuring they have a diverse workforce, Kerry-Anne is proud of their achievements in this space and the support they provide internally through affinity groups and mentoring programmes to help women succeed in logistics.

"For women in this business, we are making progress and it is great to see so many women thriving but I am still excited to see what else we can do to encourage and support more women into the logistics sector"

She also understands the global importance logistics has played through the pandemic and the fundamental role it has had to support to customers during a difficult time. There is a clear opportunity for people looking for a career change to strike while the iron is hot as this industry continues to grow. Kerry-Anne further points out that logistics is a broad, dynamic sector which is growing and has excellent opportunities for career growth. Now is exactly the right time to consider logistics as a next career move and Amazon is proud to support individuals to start their own logistics delivery business from scratch and become a Delivery Service Partner...

"The DSP programme is about working for a growing business that puts the customer at the heart of what we do. It's a chance to invent and improve every day and make a real difference to customers."

The ultimate reward for Kerry-Anne is in supporting small businesses to enable them to thrive in a world that's increasingly dependent on efficient deliveries. It's essential to listen to our Delivery Service Partners and work together to create the best and safest workspace to provide the best customer-focused performance.

The DSP programme has proven a huge success for enabling motivated individuals to start their own delivery business from scratch and for Kerry-Anne, it comes down to the satisfaction of helping these exceptional men and women along the way to achieve their goals and ambitions.



<https://logistics.amazon.co.uk/>



Launch and operate your own parcel delivery business



Amazon is seeking motivated individuals in Northern Ireland to launch and operate their own parcel delivery business. The Delivery Service Partner (DSP) programme provides an opportunity for strong leaders who are passionate about starting their own business. Joining a robust community of small businesses, you will help deliver thousands of parcels to Amazon customers every day.

Since 2011, we have worked alongside dozens of small and local UK delivery companies who have grown their businesses by providing Amazon customers with fast, reliable package delivery. As Amazon customer demand continues to grow, this program will enable us to build more capacity and facilitate new, small businesses wanting to take advantage of the growing opportunity in e-commerce package delivery.

We are looking for hands-on owners who are passionate about building and developing great teams. With low startup costs and access to Amazon's technology and logistics experience, this is an opportunity to build and grow a successful parcel delivery business. Join a community of Amazon Delivery Service Partners in one of the fastest-growing industries in the world.

What are we offering?

- **Low startup costs** – Start your business with as little as £10,000, total of £25,000 in liquid assets required.
- **Getting you started** – Benefit from deals on Amazon-branded vans, comprehensive insurance, industrial-grade handheld devices, and other services help you get your delivery business up and running.

- **Training provided** – We provide multi-week training to ensure you're set up for success, starting with a one-week introduction to Amazon in our Head Office location, followed by time in the field working alongside the community of existing owners and drivers to learn the tips and tricks of operating a successful delivery business from those who know it best.

- **A comprehensive toolkit** – We give you tools and technology to run your business, including daily processes designed to keep your operation running smoothly.

- **On-demand support** – Owners receive support from Amazon, which includes an operations manual, driver assistance for on-road issues, and an account manager.

- **Share our experience** – Amazon shares more than 20 years of technological and logistics experience to guide you in one of the fastest-growing industries in the world.

- These owners can then build their business knowing they will have:
 - Access to the company's sophisticated delivery technology
 - Hands-on training

Discounts on a suite of assets and services, including Amazon-branded vehicles customised for delivery, Amazon-branded clothing and comprehensive insurance.



If you want to learn more about the program, please scan the QR code and submit your details.

Is your Business tax efficient?



This is a question that business owners should be reviewing at least once a year. Here are five simple steps a company owner can take to reduce their tax liability from Sarah Andrew DipPFS, Wealth Management Consultant at Coulter Weir Wealth Management.

1. Company pension contributions

The contributions a company makes to a pension scheme are usually fully allowable in calculating the profits chargeable to Corporation Tax. Some options are:

- Group pension plans - an attractive recruitment tool and a justifiable business expense
- Salary sacrifice arrangements that provide cost effective pension planning opportunities for employees while reducing employer National Insurance costs

2. Claiming Allowances

It is essential that a company claims all available allowances to reduce corporation tax; the main allowances that are either not, or only partially, claimed are Research and Development Relief and Capital Allowances. It is worth obtaining expert advice on these areas to receive all entitled allowances.

3. Understanding Business Relief

While Business Relief (BR) certainly can offer Inheritance Tax (IHT) relief, the picture muddies when you start factoring in 'excepted assets', which can have a detrimental impact on any BR claim. Since excepted assets are not exempt from IHT, failing to recognise and address this issue could lead to an unexpected tax liability for the beneficiaries of the business owner's estate. Understanding these rules will ensure you have certainty over the future tax liability of your business.

4. Making use of insurance policies

Set up a plan such as Relevant Life Cover, as the premiums are treated as a business expense for corporation tax purposes and are not subject to National Insurance payments.

5. Remuneration strategy

How you take money out of your business matters too - salary and pension contributions would generally

be classed as 'allowable business expenses', and therefore would reduce the amount of corporation tax payable. On the other hand, dividends are not a business expense and will be subject to corporation tax.

The levels and bases of taxation, and reliefs from taxation, can change at any time and are dependent on individual circumstances. It is beneficial to do an annual 'Tax Health Check' with a Financial adviser.

For a free no obligation consultation please contact:



sarah.andrew@sjpp.co.uk

or follow Sarah for weekly financial education posts!



www.instagram.com

Northern Ireland Bereaved Parents have new rights to leave and pay



Writes Michelle McGinley of EEFNI – Michelle is a dual qualified Solicitor (NI & ROI) and the Director of Legal & Policy for EEFNI, an organisation that exclusively represents and advises businesses on HR & employment matters.

In April 2022, Northern Ireland will introduce Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave & Pay providing bereaved parents with rights to 2 weeks bereavement leave and 2 weeks pay. Initially, Statutory Bereavement Pay will be subject to 26 weeks of continuous service, but this will eventually be removed no later than April 2026.

The aim is to set a minimum standard for employees and provide certainty in relation to time off from work and

entitlement to pay following the tragic death of a child. The rights will only apply to employees.

Similar rights have been in place in Great Britain since April 2020. However, Northern Ireland plans to go further than GB with a commitment to extend these rights to those that suffer miscarriage. The Economy Minister has stated that Northern Ireland will be the first jurisdiction in Europe to legislate for miscarriage leave and pay in this way.

The details will be fleshed out by Regulations, but we expect that key provisions will reflect those in place in GB.

In summary the NI laws will provide right to:

- Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave: Day 1 right to two week's

bereavement leave

- Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay: Initially subject a 26 week's service requirement and pay will be at a minimum statutory rate
- Employment protections – parents taking parental bereavement leave will be protected from dismissal or detriment because of having taken leave

Unsurprisingly these new entitlements received unanimous support from the Executive with the only criticism, from some parties, were that the rights did not go far enough. That criticism was the catalyst to extend these new rights to those that suffer a miscarriage. The Labour Relations Agency will be producing guidance on these new entitlements in due course.



<https://eefni.org/>



Is the language of finance excluding women? It is time for a change

Pamela Wilson, Personal Wealth Adviser with Schroders Personal Wealth, shares her thoughts.



How could you help me?

Financial advice aims to help people live the life they want to live. I could help you with many aspects of your financial life, including:

- Protecting you and your family
- Investing for your future
- Investing for your children
- Planning and enjoying your retirement
- Passing on your wealth

I understand that not everyone feels confident when it comes to financial planning, but at SPW we aim to instill a sense of well-being through sound financial advice.

I'm still not sure that financial advice is right for me.

Knowing what to do with your hard-earned money can often be confusing. Taking time to benefit from financial advice could be worth the investment.

I believe that it's important that women take steps to understand how inflation can diminish their savings and how there are other options available to help make the most of their money. If you're worried about the perceived risks associated with investing, then a financial adviser could help you to potentially lower the risk level by developing a diversified portfolio. You don't necessarily need a large lump sum to invest. Saving little and often could gradually build a financial portfolio over time.

Schroders Personal Wealth (SPW) have recently expanded their presence to Northern Ireland to ensure that their clients can benefit from a more local experience. The firm is a joint venture between Lloyds Banking Group and Schroders plc and brings with it over 400 years of heritage in the financial services sector.

Pamela Wilson, a graduate from Queen's University who has spent her entire career practicing in Belfast, has over 25 years of financial services experience and will be focusing on bringing financial advice to those in Northern Ireland. In her engagement with Women in Business NI, Pamela is keen to break down the perceived barriers that women come up against when seeking financial advice.

Why do you think women can lack confidence when planning their financial futures?

Most professions use jargon to describe certain aspects of what they do to provide a solution. Good and relevant financial planning should be clear, transparent, and easy to understand creating a safe space to explore financial needs and goals.

As a financial adviser in Northern Ireland, it's my aim to give more advice to more people. I look to make the complex simple whilst providing an approachable source of support and guidance for everyone.

What do you think is the biggest barrier to women seeking financial advice?

A study by YouGov found that

just one in five women hold an investment, versus over a third of men.

What lies at the root of this lack of investing? Some feel sure that it is the language of finance itself, the terms in which it is discussed and how it relates to their aspirations that puts many women off. But this is potentially impacting women's long-term wealth and security.

How can you help change this?

I'm here to try to help women overcome that feeling of uncertainty, to have a conversation that is focused on their individual financial needs. This is important to me because unless women take control of their financial future, their total wealth over time could be negatively impacted, ultimately worsening the wealth divide between men and women.

To book a no obligation free consultation, visit the SPW website:



www.spw.com

or contact Pamela on:



pamela.wilson@spw.com



07900 223051

Can a mid-career gap year help you find the change you need?

Having worked in higher education for almost twenty years, in 2021, Women in Business Ambassador, Deborah Sloan decided it was time for a change and is currently taking a one-year career break from an academic role at Ulster University. Deborah is sharing insights into her career break journey (or mid-career gap year!) and offering a range of networking opportunities and events for those who also want to explore a change in their career or in other aspects of their lives. Opportunities include the chance to meet new people and make new and potentially transformative connections through an online coffee club, change circles and one-day retreats. More information is available at deborahsloan.co.uk

Deborah's background is in graduate and professional leadership development, and she also established and led the highly successful Ulster University Women's Network. She is therefore an advocate of the power of networks to support personal and professional empowerment which in turn, leads to strategic and cultural impact within organisations. Deborah is currently establishing a new consulting business which will provide research-informed insights for organisations on how to effectively leverage their staff networks.

As a mum to four girls, Deborah writes extensively (and often humorously) on the realities

for women (and men) as they juggle life and work, continuously wondering whether they have made the right choices! She believes in taking time to understand and write your own story to see how this has both shaped you into the person you already are and the person you still need to be. She encourages individuals to think about their story from the perspective of how they need to feel rather than how they need to be seen.

Deborah says: "As a mum of four girls, juggling work, home and other commitments for many years, I found my identity was often based on the roles I fulfilled for others, and I struggled to feel that I was getting what I needed never mind achieving my full potential. I always felt that something was missing from my story. The career break journey is giving me the opportunity to experiment with ideas and to find fresh perspectives on what that missing something might be! I am starting to understand myself better.

I realise there are others who feel the same way and so I am passionate about providing opportunities for people to connect with each other to share their stories. Having led the Women's Network at Ulster University, I recognise how important it is to just have a safe space to gather with others, to share and to be listened to".



If you are interested in exploring personal and professional change along with others via the networking opportunities Deborah offers, you can get in touch with her as follows:

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 🌐 **deborahsloan.co.uk**
 🐦 **@deborahsloan**
 🌐 **linkedin.com/in/deborah-sloan-20aa8841**



Yes You Can Economic Evaluation

After 3 successful years, the Yes You Can (YYC) Programme, in collaboration with the 11 District Councils, Invest NI and Women in Business came to an end in 2021. Entrepreneurship is a crucial element of a dynamic and successful economy. The rationale for programmes such as the Yes You Can Programme focusses on three crucial elements – gender equality; women's economic empowerment; and the contribution to economic growth.

Over the period of January 2019 to June 2021, 922 unique individuals have participated in YYC. In the Yes You Can Economic Evaluation it is fantastic to read of the benefits as a result of the support that was provided through the YYC Programme, including:

→ Confidence in business success	90%
→ Help to establish networks and business support professionals	90%
→ Enabled participants to run their business better than they otherwise would have done	87%
→ Help to develop sales strategy	76%
→ Help to understand the markets they trade in	73%
→ Help to identify people and skills their business might need	73%

A total of 284 participants indicated that they had started a business that was continuing to trade following their participation in programme. It is also important to note that total of 386 existing businesses were continuing to trade. Of these businesses, 80% reported that their participation in YYC had played a role in their ability to achieve sales and employment growth.

In a post-pandemic world, Women in Business are committed to developing and supporting women's enterprise in the immediate future, as it is such a critical component for the overall business and economic prosperity of Northern Ireland.

Congratulations to everyone who participated and supported the Yes You Can programme!

Hex Metalworks A pitch perfect business



Laura Mulkeen of Derry City & Strabane Council area won the 2021 Yes You Can 20K Pitching competition delivered by WIB in collaboration with Invest NI and 11 District Councils. Laura was awarded £5,000 for her business, Hex Workwear, which specialises in creating purpose-built workwear for women within STEM Industries. Learn more from Laura!

"I'm Laura Mulkeen, a welder and the founder of Hex Metalworks, my one-woman welding workshop in Derry. After ten years in event management, I took a totally different career path, becoming a self-employed pipe welder for various engineering companies. Quite the jump, but it's the most rewarding decision I've ever made!

In 2021, I launched Hex Metalworks, my own small metal fabrication workshop. To date, I've been creating custom orders for private clients. It's mainly things like fire pits and home furnishings. Recently, I

created some movie props, and I plan to pursue more creative work like that going forward. Recently, I worked with Irish Girl Guides to create 45 custom fire pits for them to sell as a fundraiser for their new national centre. It's really rewarding to get involved in bigger projects like that, as well as one-off pieces.

Throughout my years welding, it's been impossible to get suitable workwear. Women still aren't being fully catered for. Last year I pitched my idea for Hex Workwear, fire-resistant clothing for tradeswomen and I was so grateful to win the Yes You Can Pitching Competition. The prize money has been a lifeline in terms of getting the garments designs fully realised. Right now, I'm working to find the best manufacturer to create and test samples.

Alongside that, I'm a dealer for Optrel Welding Protection, a Swiss company that makes the best welding helmets and respirators on the market. I'm also doing some part-time teaching and it's so rewarding to share what I've learned with the next generation of welders. So, between supplying Optrel products, developing Hex Workwear, teaching, speaking, and running my workshop, I'm working hard and just so grateful to be doing what I love.

Find out more at

🌐 <https://hexmetalworks.com/>

Keep up to date with Laura on Instagram and LinkedIn.

📷 www.instagram.com/hexmetalworks

🌐 www.linkedin.com/

Holly Perreault, Founder & CEO of Recentre



In 2010 I had a flourishing career, a husband who was running our successful business, and two healthy children who were doing well in their studies. I lived in Arizona where we had 360 days of sunshine. Sounds great, right? It was, until childhood trauma caught up with me and without warning, I suddenly realised that I was not ok. I knew I had to

do something about it, so I took a leave of absence from work and checked myself into a 30-day residential trauma recovery programme. No phone, no laptop and for the first week, no visitors. This was a time for me to understand how what happened to me in childhood, was affecting me 30 years later.

Fast forward to 2017, I was no longer married but had a successful career at Microsoft, where I met a wonderful Northern Irish man. One day, I shared my dream with him, to offer people a safe space to heal from trauma. His only

question was "What are you waiting for"? That was the spark I needed.

In 2018, I quit my career in the corporate world, and moved to Northern Ireland. I began speaking publicly about my experience and graduated from Ulster University with a degree in Therapeutic Communications and Counselling. I also became certified as a Trauma Informed Coach. I was uniquely poised to offer a holistic approach to healing from trauma and, with the support of an amazing team, Recentre was born in November 2021.

In the only offering of its kind here, we use evidence-based interventions delivered by experts in psychological trauma. We provide a range of therapeutic and holistic activities to help people impacted by trauma. We believe everyone deserves an opportunity to not just

get by, but to thrive. It is our ethos that we can heal more effectively in community.

Our business background also supports our passion. We aim to educate leaders across all sectors to understand how trauma impacts people and their work, and how to create frameworks for an empathetic, safe and productive working environment in which all employees can succeed.



Learn more at
<https://recentre.uk/>

and connect with Holly on
LinkedIn and Instagram



www.linkedin.com



<https://www.instagram.com/recentreld/>



Celebration for SUCCESS Press Refresh Graduation

The Press Refresh Data Analytics Programme returned for 2021, offering 19 women the opportunity to learn new skills necessary to build a career within Northern Ireland's expanding IT sector. The 17 week programme is funded by the Department for the Economy

and has been delivered by Women in Business and Belfast Metropolitan College.

Participants have successfully studied towards Data Analytics qualifications such as MTA Programming in Python, MTA Database Fundamentals, Prince2 Agile

and DA-100, Analysing Data with Microsoft Power BI. With mentoring support on interviews, CV preparations and personal skills such as confidence building, resilience and communication, participants are now work ready for entry level roles in the Tech sector.

The programme came to a celebratory end on Friday 25th March as the participants attended a graduate ceremony at FinTrU, Belfast. In attendance was Graeme Wilkinson, Director of Skills Department for the Economy and team members of Women in Business and Belfast Metropolitan College who made the programme a great success. Proving how collaboration between the organisations involved in Press Refresh and employers

can help inspire and motivate women to return to the working world into a career they may previously not have considered.

As the majority of participants plan to pursue a role in Tech, it is positive to report that two programme graduates, Caroline Colgan and Mariclare Kelsall have both secured roles at FinTrU. Congratulations to everyone who has been involved in the second cohort of the Press Refresh programme.

To find out more
information on Press
Refresh, please visit



pressrefresh.co.uk



Membership Benefits

Women in Business offers a diverse membership spread throughout all industry sectors - from young women, small business owners to corporate organisations and ambassadors. With unique networking events to raise your profile and our Centre of Learning to help further your career, let us help you reach your full potential to grow professionally in 2022.



→ Professional Networking: Avail of in person networking to connect with likeminded women to help share and learn in each other's experiences



→ FREE Online Webinars: Register for our free online webinars to grow your personal & professional development while supporting your overall well being



→ Members Directory: Access to the exclusive members virtual networking platform, to contact and connect with your fellow members



→ Celebrate your success with us: You are welcome to attend our inspiring annual Awards



→ Company & Self Promotion: Profile yourself or share your knowledge in a Blog throughout the network to share across our website & 55k social media audience



→ Be part of the WIB Conferences: Choose from our 3 amazing annual conferences throughout the year



→ Membership Support: We are here to help lobby on your behalf on the important issues members may face



→ Members' News: Contribute your company's news to the WIB website and monthly Ezine, for free with our unique audience



→ Bi-annual Magazine: Contribute to our bi-annual magazine. Submit an article to help raise the profile of your role or organisation



Learn more at womeninbusinessni.com
womeninbusinessni.com/Membership-Benefits-en.aspx

2022 Events

- Networking
- Webinar
- Roundtable Event
- Conference

Events

Women In
Business
Magazine

May

●	Thursday 5	Women in Construction	Zoom	11.30 - 13.00
●	Thursday 5	Women in Energy	Zoom	14.00 - 15.30
●	Thursday 5	New Members Pizza & Prosecco Evening	Glandore Arthur House, Belfast	18.00 - 20.00
●	Tuesday 10	Fuel Your Business With Food	Zoom	10.00 - 11.00
●	Tuesday 17	Omagh Networking	Omagh Enterprise Centre	9.30 - 11.00
●	Wednesday 25	Get into the Spirit! Cocktail Masterclass	Angel & Two Bibles, Belfast	18.00 - 20.00
●	Thursday 26	WIB Book Club	Zoom	19.00 - 20.00

June

●	Tuesday 7	Women in Engineering	Zoom	09.30 - 11.00
●	Tuesday 7	Women in Finance	Zoom	11.30 - 13.00
●	Tuesday 7	Women in HR & People Management	Zoom	14.00 - 15.30
●	Wednesday 15	Chair's Lunch	Culloden Estate and Spa	12.00 - 15.00
●	Tuesday 21	Successful Strategies for engaging and converting prospects at scale	Zoom	10.00 - 11.00
●	Thursday 23	WIB Book Club	Zoom	19.00 - 20.00
●	Thursday 23	Paint and Sip	House Belfast	19.30 - 21.30

July

●	Wednesday 21	Oh, how LUSH! Pamper Evening	Lush Belfast	18.00 - 19.30
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August

●	Thursday 11	New Members Networking Evening	Glandore Arthur House, Belfast	18.00 - 20.00
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September

●		Newry Networking		
●		All-Island Female Entrepreneurs Conference		

Book your place on a WIB event at [womeninbusinessni.com](https://www.womeninbusinessni.com)

Events



Connecting, learning & inspiring with Women in Business

We are delighted to be out and about again with spectacular events, conferences and awards in true Women in Business style! It has been so good to see our members and friends across the network with our hybrid events as we continue to deliver for all of our members through both online and in person events.

Have a look at what we have been up to...

Women in Tech Conference Titanic Belfast, 25th February

Northern Ireland's leading Tech organisations & individuals came together for the 5th Women in Tech Conference. The room was alive with inspiration, ideas and insights into the world of Women in Tech! Transforming tech together with a 150+ online audience and the 200 people who joined us in person on the day! Sponsored by MCS Group.

All-Island Voices of Leadership Conference Killeavy Castle, 4th November

We welcomed a host of speakers, both international and national, who inspired us all for a half-day conference in celebration of female thinkers and doers. Leadership, distilled into stirring insights and beautiful anecdotes about effective management in the workplace and beyond. Women inspiring women, as it should be! Sponsored by InterTradeIreland.





Women in Business Awards 2022

Crowne Plaza Belfast,
10th March

We celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Women in Business Awards - a night to remember with over 500 attendees, as some of the most successful, entrepreneurial, and inspiring businesswomen throughout Northern Ireland joined us with our sponsors, Virgin Media o2 Business.

With a successful career spanning 40 years, we were delighted to present our host, Pamela Ballantine, with the Special Lifetime Achievement Award!

Congratulations to all the Women in Business Award Winners:

Award for Advancing Diversity in the Workplace

Individual Winner -
Jill Michael - A&L Goodbody

Company Winner -
Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Ltd

Award for Best Customer Service

Corporate Winner -
Aisling Press - Danske Bank UK

Small Business Winner -
Louise Skeath - SDG

Award for Best in Professional Services

Corporate Winner -
Jenny Moore - Danske Bank UK

Small Business Winner -
Una O'Duill - Home Instead

Award for Best Marketing Campaign

Corporate Winner -
Leigh Osborne - Action Cancer

Small Business Winner -
Colette McCartney - Holistic Kidz Ltd.

Award for Best New Start Up

Winner -
Melanie Dawson - Origin7 Ltd

Award for Best Small Business

Winner -
Alison McFadden - Continu

Award for Outstanding Innovation

Corporate Winner -
Kerry McCloy - Cleaver Fulton Rankin

Small Business Winner -
Johanna Scullion - HR Made Easy

Award for Excellence in IT

Winner -
Cathy Hawthorne - Kainos

Award for Outstanding Mentor

Winner -
Donna O'Connor - Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service

Award for Outstanding Management and Leadership

Winner -
Barbara McKiernan - VANRATH

Award for Young Business Woman of the Year NI

Winner -
Jenna Hill - CHILL Gas Ltd

Business Woman of the Year

Winner -
Tina McKenzie

Women in Tech Awards 2022

Europa Belfast,
8th April

Northern Ireland's outstanding women in tech were celebrated at the inaugural Women in Tech Awards. Nearly 300 guests from all business sectors came together to recognise and reward the innovative individuals operating in today's tech sector, in what was the first ceremony of its kind in Northern Ireland.

Hosted by Sarah Travers and featuring a keynote speech from Deepa Mann-Kler, Chief Executive of Neon, the awards honoured seven amazing women and one inspiring male.

The amazing Women in Tech 2022 award winners were:

C Level Woman of the Year
Mary Scullion - Fujitsu

Digital Transformation Leader
Julie Shannon - Almac Group Ltd

Entrepreneur of the Year
Tori Cameron - SNAP - Social Media Marketing

Tech Team of the Year
BT team led by **Melanie McMordie & Janet Burns**

Tech Advocate of the Year
Louise Black - PwC

Returner of the Year
Jude McVitty

Male Advocate of the Year
John Healy - Allstate NI

One to Watch in the Future
Ellen Marks - ubloquity

Outstanding Woman in Tech Award 2022
Winner -
Patricia O'Hagan MBE



Explore the Centre of Learning at Women in Business!

Whether you're a business owner, in the corporate working world or somewhere in between, check out our wide range of bespoke online programmes to support your personal and professional development.

What makes the Centre of Learning special?

- Tailored content relevant to the real working world
- Programmes to support on the issues and barriers often faced by women
- Insights, advice on best practice and key tools from industry leading facilitators
- Open your mind to external training with people from outside of your organisation
- Opportunities to network and learn from others
- Effective half day modules per programme with readings, activities, and recordings for continued learning
- Limited spaces on each exclusive programme – you don't want to miss out!
- Discounted rates for Women in Business members

Want to explore a programme further?



Visit: womeninbusinessni.com/Centre-of-Learning



or email our Programmes Co-Ordinator, Maria to find out more:
maria@womeninbusinessni.com



Back to Business

Marcomm Training

Course Details

A dynamic re-boarding programme to help employees return to the workplace after Maternity Leave with confidence. What's involved? 3 group sessions with peer networking and two 1:1 coaching sessions with fully qualified coaches to support women before, during and after their return to work.

Cost

WIB member: £1,000 + VAT

Non-Member: £1,400 + VAT



Powerful Resilience Skills

Bespoke Communications

Course Details

Get the tools needed to build your resilience when it comes to managing the challenges of your career in the face of adversity. Explore your personal triggers with a suite of techniques to fight your default responses and maintain a positive personal wellbeing.

Cost

WIB member: £250 + VAT

Non-Member: £350 + VAT



Digital Marketing & Performance

Alchemy Digital Training

Course Details

Gain further experience on social media platforms, create paid social campaigns and track effective customer journeys. With current expert advice on video, blog and graphic content creation - not forgetting marketing analytics support to help turn your marketing stress into sweet success.

Cost

WIB member: £120 + VAT

Non-Member: £170 + VAT



Mentoring Programme

Sponsored by Advance Coaching

Course Details

Support for women at all stages of their career or business development through a professional relationship based upon trust and respect. A 12-month programme exclusively for WIB members, with opportunities to become a trained Mentor!

Cost

Mentee Fee: £50 + VAT



Empowering Women in Leadership

Marcomm Training

Course Details

Command the boardroom and become truly effective in business with the tools and techniques to build your leadership capacity at all levels - whether it's leading through change or by understanding your emotions, personal brand, and behavioural styles for effective leadership.

Cost

WIB member: £250 + VAT

Non-Member: £350 + VAT



Brilliant Communication

Proclaim Consulting

Course Details

Tackle difficult conversations, influence others, and make an impact in the hybrid working world by becoming an exceptional communicator across every platform.

Cost

WIB member: £250 + VAT

Non-Member: £350 + VAT



The Power of Diversity

Training and Learning Solutions

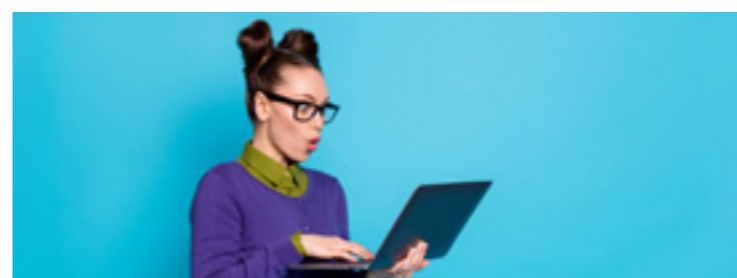
Course Details

Changing the narrative on Diversity & Inclusion – reveal your unconscious bias in a supportive environment to help create a culture of trust in your workplace. Open to both men & women!

Cost

WIB member: £250 + VAT

Non-Member: £350 + VAT



Excel Essentials

Louise Friel AKU Training

Course Details

Take it back to basics, learn how to format data for reports and presentations, formula and functions for budgets and targets to become more confident using Excel.

Cost

WIB member: £60 + VAT

Non-Member: £80 + VAT



Advanced Excel Essentials

Louise Friel AKU Training

Course Details

Support on the key components and advanced functions of Excel from an accredited Microsoft master instructor.

Cost

WIB member: £80 + VAT

Non-Member: £100 + VAT

Why Inclusion will make us stronger in 2022

The world has become smaller. We are working in a global space. Workforces everywhere are becoming more diverse – gender balance has been a hot topic for many years and now we're seeing global movements raising the awareness of the need for inclusion. To succeed in the future, companies are racing to transform. Adapting is necessary to keep ahead. To come back stronger in 2022, embracing inclusion makes good business sense.

Organisations are assessing their workplace practices around recruitment and promotion opportunities to identify in what ways they are at risk of feeding into stereotypical biases. Inclusion provides equal opportunities to all, enabling companies to fish in a larger pool and address wider societal disadvantages, opening more doors for talented individuals.

Companies can also benefit from taking into consideration the differentiated needs of their employees. The pandemic has been both a challenge and an opportunity to understand and address the differentiated needs of diverse teams. In the case of women who, for example, remain underrepresented in leadership teams and are often shouldering a higher burden of care for the wider family, a focus on diversity

and inclusion will make teams stronger and more successful. It will also take pressure off women who feel that the only way to balance all these demands is to take on less responsibility at work and go for lower paid, less stressful roles. According to a report of McKinsey & Company, 42% of women say they have been often or almost always burned out in 2021 compared to 32% a year ago.

The pandemic has been isolating, challenging and divisive, so inclusion needs to be prioritised more than ever. Whether it's addressing hybrid working from home, or the need to actively address a lack of inclusion to do with race, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability or social differences. Inclusion will help us bounce back by promoting innovation, creativity and a fresh perspective which reduces 'group think' as it recognises and nurtures cognitive diversity.

Inclusion also enables psychological safety and collaboration. An inclusive environment encourages us to be open to other's ideas and allows us to share our own without fear of ridicule or embarrassment. Inclusivity promotes responsibility



and accountability as a team. Learning about difference and working with people who are not the same as us promotes empathy and understanding. These interactions may not always be comfortable but building psychological safety is powerful for business.

It promotes good mental health and well-being by allowing us to show up in the workplace feeling we are valued for the difference we bring while also feeling that we belong. A workplace lacking inclusion can trigger isolation, anxiety, anger, and injustice.

Working in an inclusive team allows you to take a step back to see what your actions say. Recognising your biases is the first step to changing your behaviour and breaking down the barriers. We explore this and other themes mentioned

above in *The Power of Diversity Programme* (See p.20-21)

Using the time during a crisis like the pandemic to make a visible commitment to inclusion is a powerful way to harness change for the better bearing in mind that diverse teams are long proven to be more innovative, resilient and high performing.

Keep up to date with Sandra



[tl-solutions.co.uk](https://www.tl-solutions.co.uk)



<https://www.facebook.com/>



<https://www.linkedin.com/>

Join today and publicly commit to building a more diverse and inclusive workplace.



Diversity Mark

www.diversity-mark-ni.co.uk



Ulster Bank International Women's Day Power Panels - Pictured left-right is Gabi Burnside, Entrepreneur Acceleration Manager; Sinead Welsh, Company Director, Informed Minds App; John Ferris, Regional Ecosystem Manager, Ulster Bank and Claudine Owens, Investment Manager, Clarendon Fund Managers.

By John Ferris, Regional Ecosystem Manager, Ulster Bank

Since the publication of the Rose Review into Female Entrepreneurship, Ulster Bank has been focusing on helping women-led businesses access investment. The findings of the report show that accessing investment remains one of the greatest barriers for underrepresented entrepreneurs. To tackle this, we used International Women's Day this year to launch our tailored investment sessions.

This programme has been designed in partnership with Clarendon Fund Managers – the first VC in Northern Ireland to sign up to the Investing in Women Code – and aims to overcome many of the challenges raised in the Rose Report.

Following a launch event on International Women's Day, twelve entrepreneurs will get tailored support on their own investment journeys.

Those entrepreneurs will hear from other women who've raised investment and take part in a series of Power Panels - think Dragons' Den with purpose - to give entrepreneurs experience of pitching to an investment panel. They will be given feedback to help them move one step closer to securing investment and take their business to the next level.

It also aims to bring a network of peers together and to provide access to Angel Investors. The programme will culminate in a pitch event where one entrepreneur will have the opportunity to pitch for investment.

This is just one example of our support for those who traditionally face the highest barriers to entry. While no one initiative will

be a silver bullet for female entrepreneurs, we are seeing shoots of progress. The work being done by Awaken Hub and Women in Business NI's partnership with techstart are great examples of local initiatives which have created positive change among underrepresented cohorts. We know these groups are much more likely to apply for a programme which is specifically tailored with their needs in mind, so it makes sense that this is where support is targeted.

It is clear that diversity is good for business and a key driver to success which is why those of us working in this space must not talk from the side-lines about the problems, but instead challenge and take action to bring about the progress we all want to see.

A Global Pandemic, **two babies** and a promotion

Caroline Feeney is the Director of Marketing and Public Affairs at Staffline Ireland, where she has worked for almost four years, a period in which the company completed a major rebrand, expanded its range of recruitment services and opened further offices in several key geographical areas across Ireland.

During that period Caroline welcomed two babies, working on some pivotal projects during both of her respective maternity leaves before returning to a newly promoted position in June 2021. Here she talks about the delicate balancing act of being a mother and continuing to grow in her professional role:

"Having worked right up until the end of both pregnancies, I never gave much thought to being pregnant in the workplace. I found the focus of work a welcome distraction from any of the niggles associated with the later stages of pregnancy and I was determined to prove I could walk up the four flights of stairs in our Staffline headquarters (the Boat, on Queen's Square) right up until the end.

"However, when our first baby Thomas arrived in January 2020, work was far from my mind! During that time my husband had a challenging job and was working long hours, so those early days were chaotic as I spent time recovering from a tricky first birth.

"Just as I felt really ready to get out walking with our beautiful son a global pandemic arrived! Doing some work at home helped keep me connected to others, I managed a few Zoom calls while Thomas sat happily in his bouncer and I inputted on our company rebrand from Grafton Recruitment

to Staffline. By that stage a surprise second baby was on its way, I returned to work in August and I worked up until the end of December of that year, before Miss Mary Kate joined us in January 2021, pandemic baby number two!

"During a regular catch up meeting with my Chief Executive in June 2021 I was delighted she showed faith in my abilities by offering me a promotion, adding the Marketing portfolio to my existing responsibilities. It was a real vote of confidence, even better she said the new role could be accommodated through a flexible working arrangement, giving me much needed reassurance that I could enjoy raising my children while working efficiently and effectively on my days in the office.

"One of the ongoing conversations I have with friends is around the delicate balancing act you have as a Mum when you want to work but feel torn by responsibilities at home. A lack of a coherent childcare strategy coming from the NI Executive often exacerbates the feeling of pressure with some really difficult decisions being faced by parents. I'm lucky to work in an environment where those pressures are acknowledged and alleviated.

"Despite the obvious challenges of parenthood holding onto your aspirations and dreams is still possible. After all your experiences of becoming a Mum, apart from challenging your confidence and energy reserves at times, ultimately makes you better at your job, you can carve out your day much more effectively and strive to succeed, just in time to get home for Peppa Pig and those all-important cuddles."





NIE Networks celebrates success and seeks new talent

NIE Networks is partnering with Ulster University to offer first year electrical engineering students the opportunity to be awarded a scholarship opportunity worth over £30,000.

The newly established scholarships will offer students a one-year paid placement with a salary over £18,000, an annual bursary of £3,000 and a host of other mentoring and career benefits.

The announcement of the new scholarships came as the company celebrated industry recognition for three of its graduating female scholarship students.

Claire Whiteside, Amy Hamilton and Kellie Cowan, have recently graduated in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, all achieving additional recognition from their universities. The three women have been sponsored through university on a NIE Networks scholarship,

including undertaking a one-year paid placement.

Kellie received the QUB School of EEECS Foundation Scholarship for achieving outstanding examination results and is presenting her thesis, 'Solar Forecasting', at this year's Universities Power Engineering Conference. Meanwhile, Claire received the QUB Frost-Smith Memorial Prize for Best Overall Performance, while Amy was awarded the University of Manchester Project Prize for her final year project.

Recognising there is a shortage of skills within the electrical engineering sector, particularly amongst females, NIE Networks is striving to increase awareness of careers within the energy industry.

Amy, who has taken up the permanent role of Low Carbon Technologies Engineer at NIE Networks, sees no limits to what she can achieve and the important role others like her, will play in a new energy vision.

"With a significant skills gap to fill, the NIE Networks scholarship programme is about sourcing and retaining the local talent that is needed to deliver a net zero carbon future."

"I'm helping to prepare the network for the increased adoption of low carbon technologies. It's an important role and one I would encourage other students who are where I was once, to pursue too. My company mentor is also guiding me towards becoming a chartered engineer, so I'm already working towards climbing the ladder."

Kellie, who is now Network Assets Strategy Engineer with the company, has benefitted from much more than just the academic and practical learning elements of the scholarship.

"NIE Networks has afforded me an opportunity I may not have found elsewhere. I've worked across assets, construction and network and strategy development, allowing me to gain hands on engineering experience."

"As well as on the job experience and being supported financially through paid work opportunities, I have also been given extensive personal development support through the internal female mentorship programme, which has been instrumental to building my confidence."

Claire, who has now taken up the permanent post of Graduate Design Engineer at NIE Networks, wants to encourage any students in a similar position to apply.

"I'm gaining varied experience every day, from costing and designing projects to modifying electrical drawings and working with manufacturers. NIE Networks continue to support my development, both as an engineer and a woman in STEM, with no barriers to what I can achieve."

"Reaching a decarbonised energy system is one of the most critical aspects of our future and I'm working at the heart of that. Roles are going to be highly specialised requiring the very best of our local engineering talent and scholarships are fundamental to nurturing that talent. For anyone reading this who wants to get involved, the opportunity is there for the taking."

To find out more about scholarship opportunities at NIE Networks and other vacancies visit nienetworks.co.uk/careers



Explore New Business Opportunities with Belfast Met

Belfast Met is here to support your personal and professional development by equipping you and your business with the skills to enhance your career, innovate and grow your business. Here are six reasons why to explore these exciting career and business opportunities.

→ **Upskill Yourself**
You can choose from a range of Free-accredited short courses in Business & Marketing, IT, Health & Social Care, Childcare or Construction & Engineering. These courses are delivered online across the year and provide opportunities for you to upskill yourself and carve out new career pathways.

→ **Upskill Your Team**
Are you a manager or business owner who wants to support and grow the skills of your staff? Belfast Met has a wide range of courses available to support professional development. The College works closely with businesses across all industry sectors and can tailor courses to the needs of you and your business – and your business may be eligible for funding towards this training.

→ **Develop Skills to Innovate**
Learn how to create new products, deliver new services, or design new processes within your business. We have supported hundreds of small businesses through fully funded training, and bespoke innovative business ideas in areas such as Emerging Technologies, Product Design, Food Development and Fashion.

→ **Explore, Design & Create Something New**
Is your new product or service still at concept stage? We can explore, design, develop and test your innovative concepts for you. You will have access to Belfast Met's wide range of specialist facilities including our 3D printers that produce proof-of-concept prototypes, as well as our pattern and sewing rooms where innovative textile-based products are created, and our industry-standard commercial kitchens.

→ **Consider a Career Change**
If you are considering a change of career, Belfast Met run graduate training programmes that provide intensive courses in IT, including Data Analytics, Cyber Security, FinTech, Software Testing and AI, with a guarantee of a job interview with a growing IT company at the end of the training.

→ **Grow your workforce**
Student Placements, Traineeships and Apprenticeships offer work-based training that can support your business to develop staff and harnesses new talent, whilst developing skills in line with your business needs.

Belfast Met has been Leading the City to Work since 1906 and we are here for each stage of your journey. Arrange a meeting with one of our Business Development Team who will be happy to discuss the wide range of support available.

You can get in touch via email:



businessdevelopment@belfastmet.ac.uk or



02890 265069.

Full details about support available can be found on Belfast Met's website



www.belfastmet.ac.uk/skillup/

www.belfastmet.ac.uk/support-for-business/





Susan Forgie, After Sales Manager of DAForgie

My parents started DAForgie over 40 years ago. We retail and service agricultural, gardening and construction equipment over 2 depots in Limavady and Lisburn. During this time the business has grown substantially using a flexible approach focused on customer service and adapting to the changing needs of the market. We are the main dealers of many well-known brands including Kubota, Honda, Merlo and Kverneland.

I joined my family business in October 2020 after working for 12 years in private practice

as a solicitor. I completed my law degree at the University of Ulster Jordanstown in 2004 and also a Masters at Queens, before I moved to England where I completed my solicitor exams at Cardiff University. Once I qualified as a solicitor in 2009, I moved to London where I stayed for 4 years before moving back to practice as a family lawyer in Northern Ireland. I really enjoyed my time as a solicitor, however when my parents approached me about their succession planning, I was delighted that they would consider me.

Although it may be seen as a natural progression to join your family business, it still took me a great deal of consideration to ensure it was the best move for me and that I was the right person for the job. My parents had always encouraged, myself and my 3 sisters to pursue our own careers. My mother always wanted joining the family business to be a choice and not something we felt pressurised into. As an adult reflecting back, I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to have my own career away from DAForgie. I do believe my mother is right and having a career separate from your family business is a positive move, as you develop so many more transferable skills and new ideas you can bring to the business. Succession planning is something that we talked about as a family. However, I have found that succession planning is not something that is often talked about in Northern Ireland, even

though it is very important. To other people in this situation, I would say, have the conversations and ask about the future plans for the business.

Since joining DAForgie, I have been on a massive journey and learning curve. My role has developed since I joined the business and I feel it is evolving every day. I am actively involved with managing staff on a daily basis and in particular our After Sales and Stores team.

Throughout the years of trading DA Forgie has built a reputation for providing an excellent quality and highly reliable service to customers. As a solicitor I realise how important customer care and managing customer's expectations is. I want DAForgie to continue to provide excellent customer care to our valued customers so that we can continue to grow as a company.

Personally, I am married with 3 young children, twins Lily and Ria who are 5 and David who is 2, and so working full time in a family business can be demanding, especially when dividing my time between work and family life. I hope that my children will enjoy growing up and helping out in the family business as much as I did and that DAForgie will become engrained in them the way it is to me.

Keep up to date with the DAForgie team on Facebook & Instagram and online at:



[D A Forgie - Home](#)



[DAForgie \(@daforgiemachinery\)](#)



[forgie.com](#)



Aoibh Johnson Copywriting



sudden out of work and in a bit of a panic, as the theatre industry came to halt. However, having worked in the arts industry consistently until this point, I had learned to remain resilient and solution focused in times of uncertainty. (Even when things went a bit crazy and buying toilet paper became impossible!!)

I have always been a great believer in fate, and it certainly came to greet me at this time! I was given the opportunity to write for business in Australia, and found myself absolutely adoring the chance to be creative and use the power of words to awaken the magic of so many amazing businesses and brands.

The time came to return home, and I started working in my business full time. (During a pandemic, I might have been crazy, but it was the right risk to take!) Since then I have been writing for absolutely incredible brands and I couldn't be more grateful. One of my most exciting works to date would have to have been writing the copy for the rebrand of the Cuilcagh Lakeland's UNESCO Geopark (Formally known as The Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Geopark).

I'm also an incredibly proud associate of Mackle Communications, and have been delighted to work on such impactful and important projects, including the

rebrand for CRANSTOUN, who are a social justice and harm reduction charity that do incredible work across the UK.

Working as a copywriter, I feel incredibly honoured to be able to amalgamate by passion for creativity with my passion for positive change. Supporting and empowering business owners who want the best for their clients, customers and staff is nothing short of a joy and I am so honoured to play my part.

My mission is to bring creativity, bravery and originality to every brand that comes my way. I truly believe, your website, your blog, your email marketing and your social media platform has the power to move mountains for your business and your life, when you use the right words. Let's find them together!

Keep up to date with Aoibh at:



[aioibhjohnson.com](#)



[www.instagram.com/aioibhjohnsoncopywriting/?hl=en](#)



[www.facebook.com/aioibhjohnsoncopywriting](#)

I have been writing for as long as I can remember and I am fervently passionate about the power of words and their potential to change the world!

I began my career within the arts industry and spent the first few years working as a performer, a Drama facilitator and a writer. I then completed my Masters degree in Contemporary Performance Practice with a focus on Feminist Protest Theatre.

After I had completed my studies, I took the leap and

started my own production company and was given an amazing opportunity to tour with my own writing across Ireland and Australia. It was an incredible experience, and having the opportunity to showcase my writing and receive 5 star reviews for my work internationally, was nothing short of a dream come true.

When the pandemic came knocking in 2020, I was performing at the 'Adelaide Fringe' in South Australia and found myself all of

Top tips for young entrepreneurs



From Katie Matthews, Founder of The Mind Tribe UK and Young Business Person of the Year, Belfast Telegraph Business Awards 2021

Starting out in business can be tough enough but add to that the additional challenges of being a young entrepreneur, it can be difficult to keep yourself motivated and moving in the right direction. There can come assumptions from others about your ability, experience or capacity to deliver based on age. Yet I

believe that age can be our superpower!

Young entrepreneurs are passionate, full of vigour, creativity, resilience, dynamism and flexibility, with a thirst for knowledge and growth. This drive and hunger makes for tenacious, innovative entrepreneurs who contribute to the economy, are able to navigate the ever-changing world of business and utilise their entrepreneurial skills to co-create a better world.

So what are my top tips for young entrepreneurs?

→ Ask for help- consciously and actively build your network, nurturing authentic relationships with others and developing a trusted circle. Get a

coach or mentor and ask yourself, "Who are my role models?"

- Don't let others' limiting beliefs of you, dictate or diminish the belief you have in yourself. Your life is your own, and you have the power to choose what you do with your life.
- Self-Awareness- It's absolutely vital to develop your self-awareness, combined with emotional intelligence and the ability to effectively self-regulate. This is where things like mindfulness practice can be extremely beneficial.
- Be Kind- to everyone, including yourself! The only voice you can never escape is the one inside your head, so treat yourself with the same compassion you show others.
- Look for opportunities – and if they don't exist, create them! If there's a change that you want to see in the world, project you want to run, business you want to set-up, go and seek it out, visualise

it, work hard for it. If the opportunity you're seeking doesn't already exist, create it!

Finding your passion, purpose and place in the entrepreneurial ecosystem can be difficult. Whenever doubt creeps in, ask yourself "Why could it not be me?". Finally, stop striving for perfection and started striving for progression – it's much more achievable!

You can connect with Katie:



www.facebook.com/TheMindTribeUK



www.instagram.com/themindtribeuk/?hl=en



twitter.com/mind_tribe



www.linkedin.com/in/katiematthewsexcel/

Visit:



www.shadydolphin.com



Connect with Shannon on www.linkedin.com/in/shannon-hegarty-594193172/

Meet Shannon Hegarty Marketing Coordinator at Shady Dolphin Studios



I started my role as Marketing Coordinator in Shady Dolphin Studios at the end of 2020, following a year in a PR Agency. During my time studying in Ulster University, I spent a year's placement as a Marketing Executive for a self-tanning brand and found that I really had

a flair for the Marketing and PR industries; I loved the mixture of creativity and logistics involved in the work.

Since working in Shady Dolphin, I have really been able to expand my skillset and develop my strengths to a greater potential. As we are an agency, the work spans across so many industries and no two projects are ever the same which has given me opportunities to dive into different aspects of work that I have not previously been a part of. Ranging from

planning and production through to scriptwriting and strategy development, my work varies daily, and I love that! I often feel very grateful to work in a place where I am considered, and always feel like, a valued member of the team.

As a woman in business, there are so many strengths and benefits that I feel empowered to bring to the field. Growing up I was lucky to have role models in the business world who were women and I look forward to continuing to set this example for younger

generations who, when asked what they want to be when they grow up, might consider being a marketer or PR specialist.

It's inspiring to read the stories of and connect with women in different industries throughout Northern Ireland; it offers a unique chance to discuss experiences and get advice from other women who have potentially been in your shoes before and offer advice for the future of your career.



Danske Bank launches Diversity and Inclusion policy

all levels of our business. Creating a culture that fosters a true sense of belonging must be thoughtfully created, actively championed, and constantly evolving. We're committed to that approach right across our business and our focus on diversity, inclusion and belonging is not a 'nice to have', nor an 'add-on', it is an absolute business and colleague imperative."

Caroline van der Feltz, HR Director at Danske Bank added:

"At Danske Bank, we have a clear purpose – helping customers, colleagues and society thrive – and our Diversity and Inclusion strategy is central to that.

"While our new D&I policy is a sign of our continued commitment to this area, as an organisation we are in always in listening mode, and our colleagues will remain pivotal in developing our strategy. They bring it life every day; D&I is truly embedded in our DNA.

"We're proud of our passionate, focused affinity networks, who are empowered and supported by senior management to set ambitious targets, take meaningful action and report on progress.

"And diversity also makes great business sense - it leads to better performance outcomes for organisations, supports their safety and soundness, and promotes financial stability."

Earlier this year, the Bank achieved the highest level of CORE – the Business in the Community Standard for Responsible Business. Danske also holds Silver status of the Diversity Charter Mark NI and in 2021 was listed in the top ten 'Best Companies' to work for in Northern Ireland.



Danske Bank has launched a new Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) policy during its first ever D&I Spotlight Week, in a sign of its commitment to creating a workplace in which all colleagues truly feel that they belong.

During D&I Spotlight Week, Danske colleagues learned more about the Bank's commitment to D&I, about the support systems in place,

and about the ambitions of the Bank's colleague-led affinity networks – its Gender Network, Rainbow Network, Enable Disability Network and Origins, its Race Equality Network.

Jenny Moore, Employment Lawyer and Chair of Danske's Belong Steering Committee, said:

"Advocacy, allyship and

accountability are just some of the themes we've explored during our Spotlight week. Of course, an inclusive workplace that really makes colleagues feel as though they belong, means different things to each individual. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work.

"Diversity, equality, and inclusion practices have to be meaningful, with colleagues heard and supported at

Mary McGuigan, Corporate and Creative Image



Mary runs Corporate & Creative Image - an Image Consultancy. Her background has been in Accountancy but after having her 4 children a career change led her to something more colourful and creative. Wanting to feel more visible in the workplace and have purpose, Mary soon realised this was a common issue amongst women. She began training in

Personal Style just before the pandemic.

The Personal Styling services aren't just about clothes, but about uncovering a client's personality and developing their self image so they can achieve their professional goals. She helps people manage wardrobe anxiety by creating a wardrobe system that works specifically for them as well as busting a lot of outdated fashion myths. Her current services include Colour Analysis, Body Shape, Wardrobe Review, Personal Style & Shopping.

Mary is a published TedX speaker "How to wear your vulnerabilities" Her talk was written so other women could relate and be inspired to focus on their self image and personal development. "there aren't enough Madonnas in the world" She believes by helping women raise their visibility and confidence we will have more female role models in the world.

Corporate & Creative Image are advocates of sustainable style having run several workshops on this topic. During personal styling services it is often pointed out that looking expensive can be achieved for little when you know how to. Mary believes It is her responsibility as an owner of a personal styling business to gently encourage and educate clients on what changing their buying habits can do for the environment.

The past few months have seen a period of growth causing her to develop the personal branding and personal development side of her business. Mary wants to be by her clients' side through the whole journey!

Keep up to date with Mary on her website and social media platforms



<https://corporate-creative-image.business.site/>



www.linkedin.com/



www.instagram.com/corporateandcreativeimage



www.facebook.com/corporateandcreativeimage



Rachelle Gaskell of Citi

Rachelle Gaskell is the Training Horizontal Program Director within Citi's Chief Administrators Office, she joined Citi ten years ago and the underlying theme of her career has, and continues to be, Transformation.

With a background in Sales Team Transformation, Rachelle originally joined Citi into the Personal Banking and Wealth Management UK business. When the

opportunity arose, she jumped at the chance of making a lateral move to manage a larger team across three locations and two business functions. Rachelle's unique perspective of Front and Back Office Transformation provided the opportunity for her to holistically learn the full business whilst driving revenue in one area and reducing expense in another. This experience prompted

another promotion and move into Citi's Institutional Client Group for Technology whereby she created a Global Learning and Development Program for over 1500 employees to increase technical and leadership skill and competency.

Within transformation there is a need to bring everyone on the journey of change which often requires training and development activities as a component of the transformation efforts. With a passion for transformation and learning and the opportunity for further promotion, Rachelle shares tips that she has learnt in her career so far:

- Work out what you love to do – Find your strengths and play to them. What drives you? For me it is intellectual stretch I love to learn!
- If you want to change course in your career or advance you may need to up-skill. Don't be afraid to take professional qualifications. By investing in yourself, your career and future will be worth it in the long run. New skills and qualifications may well give you a competitive edge to help you achieve your career goals.
- Every year is a refresh on achieving goals and objectives, you must be able to demonstrate where you have delivered value and exceeded expectation.
- Raise your profile, it is imperative that you deliver but also ensure people know what you have delivered.
- Your underlying delivery should be a given, go the extra mile in your work. If you have the opportunity, get involved in additional projects pursue excellence and be the best you can be.
- Find a Mentor, someone to talk with and ideally someone that can give you advice on networking and or make introductions

for you to help you further your network either in your existing line of business or wider.

Be Memorable: think and plan your approach and make it interesting. For senior colleagues that will be joining your existing team meeting, what questions can you ask or how can you offer and then make sure you follow through with providing additional value add to an initiative that has been discussed by the visiting senior colleague, how can they see you in action?

Be Audacious: Make your manager and or wider network aware of what you want to do to grow in your current role or to prepare for your next role. If you want X Y Z, ask for them all, you may be thrilled with just X & Y as you can prove yourself and you can always in the future negotiate further.

Be Brave: Dare to do something you don't think you can, take calculated risks, saying "yes" before you are ready, act and work it as you go – it's a sure-fire way to accelerate your progress, boost your confidence and progression opportunities.

→ Trust the process, we have all been there whereby we didn't get the role we so desperately wanted, "rejection has been redirection" for me on a few occasions to roles that suited me better. Don't dwell to much but pick yourself up and move forward!

Above all I have learnt and realised the harder I have worked the luckier I have been in my career.

For more info on Citi Belfast, and career development opportunities check



<https://jobs.citi.com/belfast>

Kate Lynch, Encirc



Encirc supplies container glass to some of the world's largest food and beverage companies. Founded in County Fermanagh in 1998, Encirc is one of the most innovative and sustainable businesses of its kind globally. With 3,500 employees across eight sites around Europe, Encirc's parent company, Vidrala, produce more than 8 billion glass containers a year. Due to the perceived nature of the manufacturing industry, Encirc's staff body is largely made up of men. Kate

has been with Encirc Glass Derrylin for 21 years. She began her career as a general operator and recently became the first female Operations Manager, not only at Encirc, but in the Vidrala Group as a whole.

Kate joined Encirc after taking a manufacturing job for a year out that turned into a career. Described by others as 'persistent and quietly resilient', Kate acts as a coach and mentor, working hard to champion women. As chair of

the Women in Manufacturing committee, Kate explains, "I use my privilege to highlight bias in the workplace and encourage employees to challenge the status quo."

Encirc offer a range of support and development, such as the One Leadership Programme, with plenty of opportunity for women to develop their skills and careers, something that Kate thinks is invaluable. "It's important that people, particularly women, take opportunities wherever possible to advance and I love helping people to grow and recognise their potential."

Kate is currently in the final stretch of her MBA and works full-time whilst raising her two sons. Despite how busy her day to day is, Kate was more than ready to take on the challenge of her new role. "I was delighted to be promoted; it feels amazing to be a role model for women

in the business who want to progress in their careers."

When it comes to career longevity, Kate is clear on what keeps her interested. "It's the whole process of transforming raw materials into a product that can be used every day and recycled for reuse again. Working in Operations gives me an understanding of how things go together, and we're constantly working to improve efficiencies and become more sustainable."

As for the future of women in manufacturing? It's looking bright. "I get to empower people in my role. Other women can see where I've come from, and they can aim to be in my position in the future."

Find out more from the Encirc team at



encirc360.com

Women in Tech at Queen's University Belfast

The Women in Tech conference was held in February 2022 at Titanic Belfast. The theme of the conference was 'Transforming Tech Together' and brought together a host of inspirational women who innovate, challenge, and embrace technology.

Queen's University Belfast was extremely proud that three of its staff took part in this informative event. Here's a recap of some insight they can share about the role of women in tech.



Dr. Nidhi Simmons is a Royal Academy of Engineering Research Fellow at the Centre for Wireless Innovation, within the Institute of Electronics, Communications and Information Technology (ECIT). Nidhi is deeply involved with promoting Women in Engineering and STEM.

During Nidhi's talk, she spoke passionately about closing the STEM gap and described her own career journey to date.

'Born in India, I had a very disciplined upbringing. My mother has been very influential in my career, inspiring me from a young age to explore STEM subjects. As mobile phones became popular in India, I became very interested in the technologies surrounding these devices which inspired me to complete my undergraduate degree in Telecommunications followed by a master's degree in Wireless Communications.'

Now with a Ph.D. in Wireless Technology, I sincerely believe that I am here mainly because my mother made me believe in my ability to learn math and science which drove my love for the subjects. It is important for families, schools, and communities to create an environment to encourage the development of these skills and to disrupt the negative stereotypes which can prevent women from taking part in these demanding fields.'



With expertise in both human-computer interaction and software engineering, Dr. Maria Angela Ferrario adopts agile and participatory methods to software systems design and investigates the role of human values in computing and of digital technology in environmental and social change.

Marie spoke at the 'Ethics in Tech - is AI transforming us for the better?' breakout session,

during which she discussed her experience of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and human value.

'Ethics in technology and AI is a widely debated topic due to how prominent it has become in our everyday life.

Some may fear the thought of AI and the idea that it could take over the role of humans or become smarter than humans. We should not fear AI, but we should be concerned. Whilst

there are some areas in which the application of AI has been found not to be beneficial, on the other hand, it can be used in positive ways.

With the challenges we are facing, from global health issues to environmental crisis, the opportunities for digital innovation are clear. Technologies are tools; we need to build them well and use them in a smart and responsible way.'



Moira Watson is a Lecturer in EEECS. Moira's current research interests are in embedding diversity and inclusion in Software Engineering practices and on the issues around recruitment and retention of female students to STEM subjects, in particular, Engineering and Computer Science.

During the panel session 'Jobs in STEM - Let's change the

stereotype' Moira discussed her experience and shared how her work at Queen's University is helping to break those stereotypes.

'Only 20% of jobs in the tech sector are held by women, and I think that's something that will continue to increase as stereotypes in tech continue to change. We really need to rethink how we speak to young people, we set that expectation

and set those gendered roles from childhood, and we need to break those biases. From my experience of 20 years in education, it's important to recognise that there are lots of different ways into tech. We need to invest in education and push to ensure that our primary and post-primary curriculum supports young people, and especially young women, to explore STEM subjects and develop a passion for these subjects.'

Bridgeen Rea-Kaya Wellbeing Teacher and Founder of Immeasurable Minds



There are innumerable benefits to practising mindfulness. What is clear is that it improves our mood, increases positive emotions, decreases anxiety and stress reactivity; helping us to stay healthy, boosting our immune system and lowering blood pressure. When we practice mindfulness we are more compassionate, less reactive

and more responsive - allowing us to have better relationships and enjoy our life

Beginning a meditation practice is free and can be integrated into any of our daily activities. Meditation will benefit your mind, your body, and your brain which all help with our work and home

life - from sharpening concentration to easing symptoms of PTSD. For long term meditators, one day of meditation shuts off genes that create inflammation throughout the body. It is only with awareness can we effectively manage our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours to consciously move toward our goals.

Here are 5 quick mindful tips:

1. Get out into nature without earpods or other distractions, experience natural mindfulness by paying attention to your surroundings. Pay attention to your feet as you take each step, pay attention to your breath and smile at the wonder of being able to walk and breath freely. As best you can keep you mind in present not on your job, or worries or concerns. If you can do this for 10 minutes a day it will help.
2. Place you hand over your heart (this is called the 'gesture of self-compassion' as the brain feels the heat from the hand as soothing and comforting) take a deep breath and say the words "breathe it'll be ok". If you have time you can take more mindful breaths. This will activate your parasympathetic nervous system and calming hormones.
3. Another favourite is to use the traffic lights for the stopping practice. What is a red light? It is a stop sign. So every time you see a red light stop, relax and take 3 mindful breaths. How much more pleasant is this than cursing the traffic? It will also enable you to arrive to your destination with much less stress hormones.
4. Download the FREE app Insight Timer. Search for my name Bridgeen Rea-Kaya. I have 12 FREE guided meditations available. You can download to any device or website and start meditating right away.
5. Lastly, I really recommend gratitude practice, if you do nothing else even writing down 3 things you are grateful for every day could change your life for the better.

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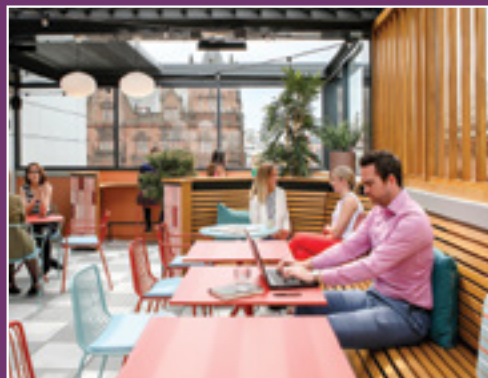
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