

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **WeAreTheCity unveil their 2021 Rising Star winners**

WeAreTheCity, together with the Royal Bank of Canada, are proud to announce the winners of their 2021 Rising Star Awards.

Now in their seventh year, the awards are the first to focus on the UK's female talent pipeline below management level. Through these awards, we celebrate 100 individual female contributors that represent the leaders and role models of tomorrow. WeAreTheCity hope that by raising the profile of our shortlist and winners, we will encourage organisations to consider how they strengthen the development of their female pipeline for the future.

The awards were entered by over 1,000 individuals and were judged by a panel of 51 independent judges. Over 40,000 public votes of support were received for the 200 shortlisted nominees from across 115 countries.

The 2021 awards are headline sponsored by Royal Bank of Canada. Category sponsors include an array of leading FTSE 100 companies and industry leaders: 3M, Accenture, Barclays, Bloomberg, British Army, Cancer Research UK, C&C Search, Citi, CMI, Elysian Search Consulting, Goldman Sachs, GSK, Highways Sector Council, HSBC, Lloyd's, National Grid, Northern Trust, Oliver Wyman, Oxford Said Business School, Reed Smith and Sage.

The list of winners showcases remarkable women within the UK from across 20 categories representing different industries and professions. Those highlighted include Alice Hendy, who founded R;pple Suicide Prevention after the tragic loss of her brother, Josh, in 2020; Asha Mohammed, an award winning second year junior doctor and an activist who has made it her mission to tackle gender-based violence with a specific focus on female genital mutilation; Jennifer Ogunyemi, Founder of Sisters In Business, which focuses on changing the narrative of the Muslim business woman; and Samantha Gould, Head of PR, NOW: Pensions, who is passionate about creating a fairer UK pension system for herself and her young daughter and future generations.

The awards also include a Company of the Year prize, awarded to the Royal Air Force. The Royal Air Force was formed in the crucible of the First World War and for over a century has been constantly dedicated to serving the needs of the Nation both in times of peace and conflict.

The awards also recognise five Rising Star Champions, who are actively supporting the progression of women in the workplace. These include Maysoon Shafiq, Founder and Director of Al Mu'Minun (The Believers), a non-profit organisation dedicated to serving the youth through open spaces of spirituality, dialogue and empowerment; and Bernadette Thompson, Deputy Director for Inclusion, Wellbeing and Employee Engagement in the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG); a notable diversity advocate and public speaker, working with leaders across government and the public sector to drive a culture of inclusion and increase the pace on representation of Black and Minority Ethnic employees particularly at more senior grades.

New for this year, we are also celebrating women around the world with our Global Award for Achievement. This year's winners include Anju Gurung, who is an Associate Civil Servant for the British Gurkas Nepal; Isabella Gomes, who is currently freelancing as a Coronavirus frontline reporter for the Baltimore Sun; and Brigadier General Ishrat Rafique Eshita, who is the Deputy Chief Intelligence Officer, IPC – Global Command of the International Police Commission. She is also the Country Chief Bangladesh of Counter Crime Intelligence Organization.

We are also celebrating Men for Gender Balance, which celebrates senior men who are championing women and gender balance either inside or outside their organisation. Amongst the winners for this year are Gary Ford, Director, Moonshot Consultancy, who is a Male Allies advisor for Women on the Wharf and provides keynote presentations or run workshops on creating male ally groups; and Peter Palmer, Trustee and Director (Voluntary) S.E.E.D (Support and Education for Eating Disorders Lancashire).

WeAreTheCity also announced their Editor's Choice winners... Those receiving the Editor's Choice award are individuals who have been specifically selected by the leadership team at WeAreTheCity and one independent judge. This award recognises their outstanding contribution and tireless efforts towards gender equality, both in the workplace and across wider society.

Our 2021 winners, judges, sponsors and supporters will be invited to a prestigious ceremony, with more details to be announced at a later date.

**Dave Thomas, CEO Europe, Capital Markets & Wealth Management, Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)** said, "Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) is delighted to be powering the Rising Stars Awards for the second year. These awards are critical to celebrate and showcase incredible talent across multiple industries in the UK, something that is particularly important during these challenging times. Diversity and inclusion is more than just a value at RBC, it's our strength,

and it's one of the ways we bring our purpose of helping clients thrive and communities prosper to life."

**Vanessa Vallely OBE, Managing Director, WeAreTheCity, said,** "I am so proud that for the seventh year running WeAreTheCity has been able to shine a light on the achievements of so many remarkable women across the UK. Our 2021 winners join a phenomenal alumnus of 650 previous winners who continue to soar, both professionally and personally. I am ecstatic to welcome our 2021 winners to the WeAreTheCity family and to watch them progress into the senior positions they so rightly deserve."

**-ENDS -**

## **EDITOR'S NOTES**

[WeAreTheCity.com](https://www.wearethecity.com) is a free, centralised hub for women who want to progress in their careers, enhance their skills and build their external networks.

Through the website, we provide:

- Career related content to inspire and motivate our members (+10,000 articles)
- Connections to 350 female networks who support women in their personal/professional progression
- A calendar of female-orientated events where our members can enhance their networks and grow their skills
- The latest knowledge and information on women in the workplace e.g. research reports, business schools, female development programs & returnships
- WeAreTechWomen, a dedicated section for female technologists featuring industry events, news, networks, conferences and awards
- Features on key charities, social enterprises & schools where our members can give back to their local communities
- Visibility of jobs via WeAreTheCity Jobs from firms seeking to improve their gender balance
- The opportunity to enter our annual awards, Rising Star Awards and TechWomen100
- The opportunity to attend our conferences, WeAreFutureLeaders and WeAreTechWomen

## **WeAreTheCity in numbers:**

- Founded in 2008
- 120,000 members (15k Women in Technology)
- 10,000 career related articles
- Promotion of over 350 women's networks
- Access to 50,000 women through our social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn)

- 85+ events run/co-partnered

**For more information, press enquiries or images, please contact:**

Alison Simpson – Digital Content Editor

**Tel:** 01268 770675

**Email:** [alison@wearethecity.com](mailto:alison@wearethecity.com)

## **APPENDIX**

### **All Other Industries**

- Alex Canavan – BT Group
- Charlotte Morphet – St Albans City and District Council / Women in Planning
- Emily Wallis – Sainsbury's
- Kritika Singh – Bristol Marriott Royal Hotel & Bristol Marriott City Centre
- Samantha Gould – NOW: Pensions

### **Banking & Capital Markets**

- Eunice Zhu – SMBC Nikko Capital Markets (Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation)
- Hannah Awonuga – Barclays
- Meenal Upadhyay – Morgan Stanley
- Yaa Ofori-Ansah – Barclays
- Yulia Manyutina - Coutts

### **Charity & Not-For-Profits**

- Emily Cunningham – South Tyneside Council
- Hannah O'Neill – Action Tutoring
- Kiran Sahota – Believe in Me CIC
- Sherrie Smith – Gypsies and Travellers Essex
- Shreen Mahmood – Muslims Connect

### **Defence**

- Charlotte Davies – Royal Air Force
- Claudine Martin – British Army
- Joanne Ellett – British Army
- Karen Barnicoat – Ministry of Defence
- Megan Lloyd – British Army

### **Digital**

- Anisha Malde – IBM

- Jessica Thorne – IBM
- Rimshah Razzaq – BBC
- Swati Gupta – Cognizant Technology Solution
- Teneeka Mai – Oliver Wyman

### **Diversity**

- Caroline McIntyre – NatWest
- Kate-Lily de Graft Johnson – British Land
- Lea Armstrong – Barclays
- Louise Goux-Wirth – UWE Bristol
- Siwan Smith - KTN

### **EA & PA**

- Ann Hodson – PwC
- Hilary Lambert – J.P. Morgan
- Saadia Sharmin – Black Antelope Law
- Stacey Kowalczyk – Oliver Wyman
- Tegan Duffy – Baker McKenzie

### **Education & Academia**

- Fiona Yelland – Queen Mary University London
- Meera Chudasama – Oakgrove School
- Tanya Howden – Heart of Midlothian FC
- Toria Bono – Thomas A Becket Junior School
- Yamina Bibi – Forest Gate Community School

### **Energy & Utilities**

- Danielle Stewart – National Grid
- Kirsty McDermott – National Grid
- Oyin Talabi – Buro Happold
- Peny Lantzouni – Shell International
- Ravneet Kaur – Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult

### **Entrepreneurs & Startups**

- Alice Hendy – R;pple Suicide Prevention
- Amandine Flachs – WildMeta
- Jennifer Ogunyemi – Sisters In Business
- Sarah-Jane Mintey MBE – Developing Experts
- Sophia Parvizi-Wayne – Trado Technologies

### **Healthcare**

- Asha Mohammed – NHS
- Devina Maru – Royal College of General Practitioners
- Ifewumi Fagunwa – NHS/The SHAKE Africa Project
- Monique Wheatle – African Caribbean Medical Mentors (ACMM)
- Uyiosa Ogunbor - Medsimple

## **HR & Recruitment**

- Anisa Aksar – Nivaura
- Annie Lummis – Barclays
- Bukola Bayo-Yusuf – Excellerate Black Futures
- Farrah Ekeroth – EY
- Tomi Ibirogba – AET UK

## **Infrastructure, Transport & Logistics**

- Alexandra Egge – Mott MacDonald
- Amy Whitehead – London Underground
- Emma Nicholson – SLC Rail
- Emma Palmer – Rail Delivery Group
- Hanna Osundina – Balfour Beatty Investments

## **Insurance**

- Amarbir Dhesi – PwC
- Neeru Verma – PwC
- Rebecca Stewart – Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty
- Sabina Kravcak – AXA
- Sian Toussaint - PwC

## **Investment Management**

- Alexandra Faye – Liontrust Asset Management
- Amanda Kemp – Aon
- Cissy Chan – BlackRock
- Memento Charinga – Legal & General Investment Management
- Rachel Harbers – Morgan Stanley

## **Law (The Lynne Freeman Award)**

- Christina Warner – 4 Brick Court Chambers
- Emily Agnoli – Simmons & Simmons
- Erika Pagano – Simmons Wavelength (Simmons & Simmons)
- Rachel Welch-Phillips – Bird & Bird LLP
- Simone Goligorsky – Reed Smith LLP

## **Professional Services**

- Avery Johnstone – Kite Insights
- Chloe Priestley – PwC
- Jolee Tung – Oliver Wyman
- Kajal Chhopia – Bank of England
- Preeti Singh - KPMG

## **Science & Engineering**

- Alexandra Mather – WSP
- Chidinma Okolo – Diamond Light Source
- Frida Nzaba – Rolls Royce Plc
- Nipuni Karunaratne – Rolls Royce Plc
- Sylvia Lu – u-blox AG

## **Technology**

- Eiman Raza – EY
- Emma Martin – BT
- Eneni Bambara-Abban – SOKOSHOPPER
- Suze Shardlow – Suze Shardlow
- Torgyn Erland - QuantumBlack

## **Champions**

- Bernadette Thompson – Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government
- Dawn Childs – National Grid
- Fiona Barrett – Genius Within CIC
- Maysoon Shafiq – Al Mu’Minun – The Believers
- Rikki Alderman – The British Army

## **Company**

- Royal Air Force

## **Men for Gender Balance**

- Gary Ford – Moonshot Consultancy Ltd
- Gus MacFarlane – Barclays
- Joe Fowles – Oliver Wyman
- Peter Palmer – S.E.E.D. Lancashire
- Tom Robb - PwC

## **Global Award for Achievement**

- Anju Gurung – British Gurkhas Nepal

- Arpita Agrawal – HSBC
- Isabella Gomes – Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting
- Ishrat Rafique Eshita – International Police Commission
- Jana Jhaveri – World Can Code

### **Editor's Choice**

- Amanda Newman – Accenture
- Lauren Shute - Barclays
- Tribeni Chougule – Visa
- Samaira Mehta – Coder Bunnyz LLC
- Vicki Lau - Independent