



# Press Release



## WeAreTheCity Announces Winners of the 2025 Rising Star Awards, Powered by RBC

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WeAreTheCity is proud to reveal the winners of the **2025 Rising Star Awards**, sponsored by **RBC**. Now in its 11th year, these prestigious awards spotlight the achievements of trailblazing women below senior leadership level, honouring those making significant contributions across industries and inspiring the next generation.

 [View the full list of 2025 winners here](#)

This year, the awards attracted **over 1,120 nominations, 8,000 public votes**, and entries from more than **100 countries**, reaffirming the global reach and impact of the Rising Star community. Winners were selected across **20 categories**, including Technology, Defence, Law, and Education.

*“The calibre of entries this year has been truly exceptional,” said **Dr Vanessa Vallely OBE**, Founder of WeAreTheCity. “Every one of these women should be extremely proud of their achievements. They are key contributors to their industries and outstanding role models. Congratulations to all the winners – your success is well deserved and an inspiration to us all.”*

### Spotlight on a Few of Our 2025 Rising Stars

- **Meehika Barua (Advertising & Media)** – A freelance journalist, published in *The Guardian*, *Vogue*, and *The Washington Post*, Meehika champions underrepresented voices through storytelling focused on identity, gender, and equity.
- **Amy Bray (Charity & Not-for-Profit)** – The 22-year-old marine biologist and founder of *Another Way* has planted over 30,000 trees and mentored youth changemakers through the *Power of 10* movement.
- **Dr Bo Kelestyn (Education & Academia)** – Associate Professor at Warwick Business School, Bo has pioneered design thinking in education and co-led Ukraine's education recovery initiative.
- **Juliana Smith (Technology)** – A data analytics lead at BOC, Juliana drives transformation through digital tools while advancing diversity in STEM through mentoring and her *STEM*

## Recognising Champions, Allies & Global Leaders

- **Champion Award: Dr Natalie V. Bailey**, Chartered Psychologist and founder of Thriving Pathways CIC, recognised for her leadership in mental health, mentorship, and equity.
- **Global Achievement Award: Sara Yahia**, HR expert and author of *Quietly Sparks*, for her global DEI leadership and innovative inclusion strategies.
- **Men for Gender Balance Award: Alex Jonas**, Management Consulting Director at Accenture, honoured for championing women in tech and inclusive workplace culture.
- **Public Vote Award: Dr Khadijat Olorunlambe**, Assistant Professor at the University of Birmingham, acclaimed for her research in digital diagnostics and commitment to STEM outreach.

## Editor's Choice Awards

Selected by WeAreTheCity leadership and an independent judge, this year's honourees include:

- **Lisa Goodchild**, Chief Trouble Maker at Digilearning, for breaking barriers in digital education and bridging the digital divide.
- **Georgina Worrall OBE**, Head of POWERful Women, recognised for driving gender diversity in the energy sector and recently awarded an OBE for her efforts.

## Company of the Year: EY

The **Company of the Year** award goes to **EY**, recognised for its organisation-wide commitment to the progression and empowerment of women at all levels.

*"Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) is continuing to deliver on our Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Roadmap and bring our Purpose Framework – Ideas for People and Planet™ – to life," said **Ayesha Patel**, COO, RBC Capital Markets, Europe. "We're proud to support the Rising Star Awards for a sixth year and help spotlight this incredible talent."*

## Celebration Event – 10 July 2025, The Londoner Hotel

Winners will be celebrated at a gala awards ceremony at **The Londoner Hotel, Leicester Square**, on **10 July 2025**. The evening will include a special performance by the Liverpool Signing Choir. 📌 [Book your tickets here](#)

## Thank You to Our Sponsors

Thank you to our headline sponsor RBC, and supporting sponsors Accenture, Barclays, Bloomberg, Browne Jacobson, CMI Women, Dentsu, Knight Frank, Macquarie, Maggie's, Male Allies UK, Nomura, Northern Trust, Northrop Grumman, PwC, Reed Smith, Warner Bros. Discovery, and Warwick Business School.

## Congratulations to All Our 2025 Winners

To our winners and nominees — thank you for your brilliance, your drive, and your commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable world of work. We can't wait to see what you do next.

About the Company

[WeAreTheCity.com](#) is a website that provides free career resources for working women across the globe. WeAreTheCity also shines a spotlight on women through a series of awards and listings such as the Rising Star Awards (recognising Junior to mid-level women across 20 industries), the Trailblazer50 (recognising senior gender campaigners, women's charity leads and allies), the Pioneer20 (recognising female refugees who create impact and provide support within the refugee community) the Themis20 (recognising outstanding female professionals in the legal sector). To date, WeAreTheCity has recognised over 2,000 women through their various awards and provided support thereafter through their partnerships with business schools and education providers. WeAreTheCity also hosts free webinars, conferences, and events throughout the year. To date, they have upskilled more than 40,000 since their formation in 2008. They currently have 80,000 female members and a following of 60,000 across social media platforms.

[WeAreTechWomen.com](#) is WeAreTheCity's sister company dedicated to seeing the increase of women in technology. WeAreTechWomen provides free resources and job opportunities to women working in Tech. They also shine a spotlight on women through their TechWomen100 awards (recognising junior to mid-level women, male allies, senior champions, networks, and companies). WeAreTechWomen host several conferences and summits throughout the year to support women into leadership positions and to address the barriers faced by women in the tech industry. To date, they have helped to upskill over 25,000 global women. WeAreTechWomen has a membership of over 40,000 women and a social media following of 30,000.

Both organisations were founded by Dr Vanessa Vallely who was awarded an OBE for her services to women in 2018.

Media Contacts

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