



**INCLUSIVE  
BOARDS.**

# Briefing: Ethnic and Gender Diversity In the Technology Sector

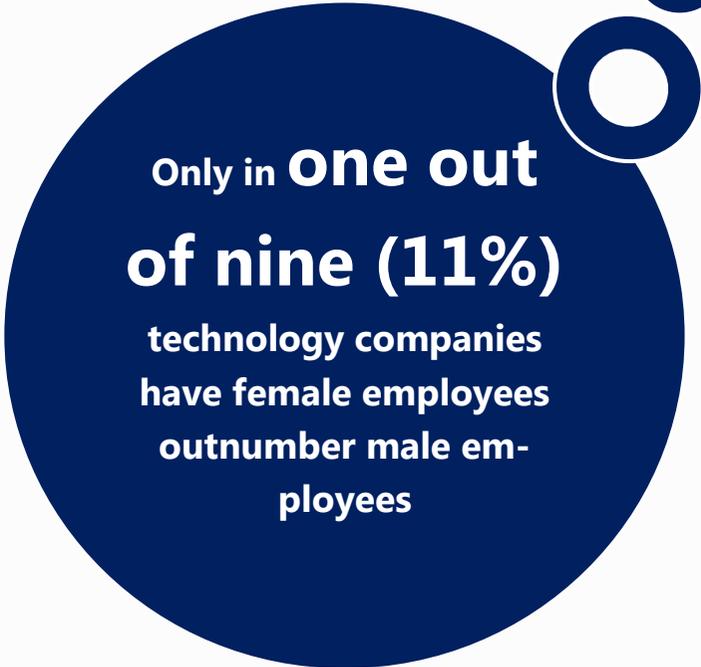
In an age of digital disruption, innovation and growth, the technology sector is the driving force behind the expansion and development of the digital ecosystem. Technological advancements such as commoditised artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, and blockchain have gained considerable ground in recent years and further stressed the importance of the sector in enabling organisations to operate more effectively and efficiently.

In the UK alone, it is estimated that over 1.5 million people are working in the digital sector or in similar roles across other sectors of the economy. In 2016, financial investment in digital technology contributed £6.8 billion to the economy, 50% higher than any other country in Europe. Over the past five years, London alone has attracted more financial investment than Paris, Berlin and Amsterdam combined. However, 68% of total UK digital tech investment in 2016 was in regional clusters beyond London.

Tech companies within cities such as Edinburgh (£159 million), Cambridge (£153 million), Bristol & Bath (£109 million), Oxford (£106 million), Manchester (£78 million), and Sheffield (£61 million) attracted nearly £700 million in funding combined.

Despite these high numbers, the majority of workers within the sector are male. A survey by UK Tech City reveals that only in one out of nine (11%) technology companies have female employees outnumber male employees. In more than half (53%) of these business, men outnumber women by at least three to one. By comparison, women represented 46% of the labour force in the UK in 2014.

The lack of gender diversity in the tech sector has resulted in the formation of organisations such as Women in Tech, Girls Who Code and Ada Developers Academy. The aforementioned organisations aim to equip women with specialised skills and knowledge that will allow them to secure high earning jobs in the male dominated sector.



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## Key Facts: Gender Diversity in Leadership

- The Fintech Census stated 17% of senior executives in UK Fintech are women. Women make up 29% of staff in the whole sector. 7/10 staff were male at the 245 Fintech businesses surveyed
- Only 4% of UK software developers are women.
- 30% of 450 technology executives stated their groups had no women in leadership positions
- A 2016 McKinsey report revealed that women make 37% of entry level roles in tech, 25% advance to senior management roles and 15% reach the C-suite
- At Amazon, only 25% of women are in tech roles but none are in leadership
- Of eight industry tech giants including Google, Facebook and Microsoft, none have reached equal gender representation
- A study by the British Computer Society found that women account for a mere 17% of the technical in the technology industry



# Barriers to Gender Diversity

## Less Women than Men Studying STEM Related Degrees

- PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) interviewed 2,000 British college and university students to investigate the gender disparity. They found that only 27% of female students said they would consider a career in technology, compared with 61% of males, and only 3% said it would be their first choice
- World Economic Forum 2016 global Gender Gap Report shows that 30% of all male students graduate from STEM subjects in comparison to 16% of all female students graduate from STEM subjects
- In 2014, a report by Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics showed that the male dominated undergraduate degrees are Engineering and Technology (86% male) and computer Science (83% male). This results in less girls graduating with STEM qualifications, thus, less female graduates have the skills required for tech roles

## Gender Bias and Stereotypes

- Only 8% of women surveyed say they've never experienced gender bias in the workplace

- 35% of women highlight unequal pay between men and women for the same skills
- Gender bias includes being overlooked in meetings, ideas dismissed or usurped by male colleagues later etc.
- Lack of visible role models for girls
- ISACA study shows that the two biggest barriers women say they face in the tech sector are the lack of a mentor (48%) and lack of a female role model (42%)

## Motherhood

- Similar to other sectors, women express the difficulty of being a mother and having a career in tech
- They do not feel supported by their employers. There are inflexible work hours. They felt pressures to return to work and to attend work meetings abroad while leaving home their nursing babies
- Many felt that the maternity salary was inadequate to pay for childcare

## Not for People like Us!

A report by Tech City UK reveals that only 13% of women are interested in a career in the technology sector. The remaining respondents are not attracted to the sector primarily due to a perceived lack of skills (45%). Another common cause is the lack of knowledge about the sector (38%), while a worrying quarter (24%) stated that the tech industry is 'not for people like them'.

*"It is so concerning that technology is failing to attract young women. Diversity is crucial if we are to build world-beating technologies that can improve people's lives. It is clear that more must be done, both by the technology industry, and in schools, to show young women that they are more than capable of excelling in this industry."*

Dr George Windsor, Senior Insights Manager at Tech City UK

## Student Representation and STEM Subjects

- One fifth of all UK-domiciled STEM students are from a BAME backgrounds and as such, are an essential part of the UK STEM talent pipeline
- Women were less than a fifth of those studying computer science (18%) and engineering and technology (16%) within though they make up half of the UK population



## Spotlight on UK Black Tech



UK Black Tech was formed in 2017 with the aim of building an inclusive tech economy 'which leads to better access, service and results for all'. Developed on the rationale that ethnic minorities are underrepresented within the digital sector (1-2%), UK Black Tech seeks to diversify the pool of talent by creating a more inclusive space equally open to non-white individuals. Attracting appli-

cants not only has the potential of diversifying the current workforce, it also arguably expands it. In doing so, UKBT seeks to improve access, service and results for everyone in the tech sector and highlight that 'diversity and Inclusion is not simply a moral issue, it will help influence the tech sector's economic performance and growth.'

## Case Studies I

Dame Stephanie 'Steve' Shirely



Having arrived to the UK from Nazi Germany as a child refugee, she was placed in foster care, picked up English and went to school excelling at maths and ultimately working in computing.

Later in her career, she founded Xansa, now part of Steria, a leading ICT consultancy. The male-dominated world of tech led her to adopt the name of 'Steve Shirley' which, according to her, was vital for business success. In 2014 she stated that she went into business with 'a mission for women'.

Camille Drummond



Camille is the Head of group PPR and function finance at British Petroleum and is an experienced leader in finance and technology. She is also a member of the Women in Banking and Finance group.

Recently, she chaired the BP Women's network in Canary Wharf and was awarded the STEM leader of the year award in 2015 at the Black British Business Awards.

Jacqueline de Rojas



Jacqueline is the CEO of Tech UK and a Non-Executive Director on the boards of Rightmove and Costain. The media has previously referred to her as a titan in the tech industry.

She is also a technology advisor for Girl Guiding, an association encouraging and supporting young girls to study STEM subjects.

Jacqueline entered the Computer Weekly Hall of Fame in 2016 and was voted the most influential woman in IT in 2015.

## Case Studies II

Martin Ijaha



Martin Ijaha is the co-founder and CEO of the UK fintech Neyber, a consumer lending program that allows employees to let staff borrow money and repay through salary deductions.

A former investment banker at Goldman Sachs, the 35-year-old was inspired by Sou-Sou, a traditional West African saving club used by his mother.

The start-up received over £100m in funding in 2014 and by 2015 had already lent £70m.

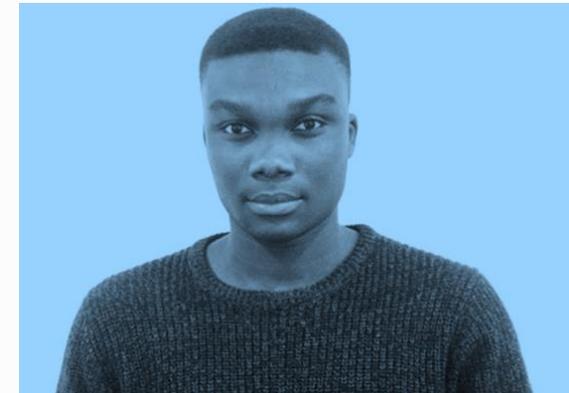
Adizah Tejani



Having worked as a technology executive for several years, Adizah took on the role of Director of Marketing at the fintech company Token. Previously, she worked with international technology companies such as Google, Microsoft and Facebook.

Adizah is a strong proponent of attracting more women into the digital sector, having hosted a series of events such as Code First Girls with the goal of inspiring young girls to joining the digital industry.

Timothy Armoo



Tim is the CEO and founder of Fanbytes, an advertising company backed by investors in the UK and the US. The company helps brands engage with young people through 'programmatic influencer network on Snapchat'.

Tim's start-up is working with some of the largest global brands such as Universal, Deezer, Warner and YouGov and was featured in Forbes, Huffington Post and the Independent.

## Lessons from across the Atlantic

In the US, 30 of the world's leading companies including Intel, Pinterest and Spotify have signed a Tech Inclusion Pledge that forces the companies to publish their diversity goals, to recruit, retain and advance their BAME employees as well as investing in partnerships that increases pipeline and train BAME talents, however there is no UK equivalent.

## The Digital Talent Programme

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has launched a £7m Digital Talent Programme funded by the London Enterprise Panel to train and inspire BAME Londoners. The initiative provides free industry approved digital skills training in code, web development etc. In addition to this, the programme also provides funding for projects around London which focus on STEM subjects

## Lack of Data

The percentage of BAME employees in the British tech world is not known. Estimates by the British Computers Society set it at 1-2%. The underlying causes of the unrepresentative world of tech in the UK are also worth exploring. While lessons can be drawn from anecdotal case studies and other sectors, these do not provide sufficient reliable data to allow the creation of policies and programmes that can support this area of work.

Existing initiatives such as Afrotech Fest and UK Black Tech go beyond numbers and highlight both the desire and need to provide enhanced access and create networks for members of the society whom are not represented in the tech sector.

## Moving Forward

Given the limited availability and lack of recent statistics, future research should examine the number of women and BAME individuals within various sub-sectors of the digital economy (such as med-tech, agri-tech and fin-tech), both in leadership and at staff level.



## Conclusion

The technology sector is a crucial part of today's economy. Prime Minister Theresa May rightly stated that those who work in this field are 'at the forefront of a great British success story'. Women and individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds are yet to fully become a part of this story.

The available body of research confirms that the tech sector faces similar challenges to those of other sectors of the economy. Nonetheless, the staggering discrepancy between men and women and the scant number of individuals from non-white backgrounds

mean that efforts to achieve gender parity as well as societal representativeness must intensify.

To tackle gender inequality and improve ethnic diversity, organisations at all levels within the sector should make use of their resources and creativity to build inclusive environments. With the tech sector expanding at rapid pace and contributing to the economy more than other sectors, it is imperative that it begins to mirror the people whom it serves.



## About Inclusive Boards

We are an agency set up specifically to support organisations in efforts to develop more diverse boards and stronger governance structures. Our services include executive search, executive training, and advisory.

There are 60,000 professionals within our network and a reach that expands into communities across the UK.

## Some of our activities

We have worked with **66 Tier 3 sport organisations** to support their development of diversity action plans.

We have also worked with some of the largest charities in the UK including **the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), British Red Cross** and **Amnesty International**

In April 2016 we **launched 'New View 50'** at the Houses of Parliament. A **publication** showcasing the top 50 BAME leaders from within public sector organisations.



Executive Search



Executive Training



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Advisory Services

## Our Customers



## Our Services

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