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INDUSTRY WEEKLY DIGEST

School of Hospitality & Tourism Management

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SHAPING A GENDER INCLUSIVE TECH AND TRAVEL INDUSTRY

The **IWTTF** is an international forum designed to encourage connections, engagement and participation of all women and all individuals. This inclusive and non-conventional platform focuses on empowering women across the travel and tourism industry through acknowledging contributions, sharing good practice and presenting innovations.

Following the annual **IWTTF conference** (2021), **Lydia Clark-Sutton** and **Ashton Smith** identify the stark gender imbalance in the tech industry and explore how it can be overcome.

Have a great weekend!



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A WOMAN'S VOICE IN TECH AND TRAVEL

LYDIA CLARK-SUTTON AND ASHTON SMITH

As technology advances, the travel and tourism industry is becoming more and more dependent on these digital platforms and innovations. As we progress towards workplace equality, arguably women are still underrepresented in the UK's technology workforce with only **23%** of people working in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) roles being female.

This stark **gender imbalance** in the tech industry makes it one of the most male-orientated occupations in the UK, experiencing a growing shortfall of IT professionals. To increase this representation employers could place a priority on encouraging women to pursue tech roles through mentoring and training programmes. The strong numerical dominance of males in this field has created a systemic hegemony that calls for a disintegration in gender biases that will raise woman's confidence and aspirations in tech-based companies.



“Always remember the positive voices that women have and the ability they have in reaching their dreams” - IWTTF Speaker

The **IWTTF digital conference** recognises that strides can be made in the tech and travel industry through shattering the '**glass slipper effect**'! This encapsulates when occupations are associated with distinctive characteristics making them suited for certain people, in this case males in the tech industry. So, to all you Cinderella's out there... let's leave the glass slipper at the ball!

Role models are fundamental in encouraging learning and challenging our own prejudices. Female role models associated with STEM can be highly effective in negating the '**stereotype threat**' of this industry. Such female empowerment can not only increase representation but give women the courage to innovate and collaborate on new and exciting projects that can revolutionise the industry. The IWTTF is a forum that not only promotes inclusivity but provides inspirational women and like-minded men a stage to share their journeys and knowledge.

Will you be joining the next IWTTF forum to learn more about a gender inclusive travel industry?