

For immediate release: Tuesday 17 November 2015

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The hidden realities facing female digital entrepreneurs to be put under the spotlight at two day event in Nottingham

The hidden challenges facing women aspiring to be digital entrepreneurs, and the lack of research on their experiences, will be under the microscope at a two day event at the University of Nottingham Business School on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 November 2015.

Missing in Action - Women and Digital Enterprise in the UK, led by Digital Women UK, the Haydn Green Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Dr Angela Martinez Dy, will provide a 'thought space' for established and aspiring female digital entrepreneurs, creatives and academics to develop strategies for change.

According to [techUK](#), statistics show that there hasn't been any significant improvement in the representation of women in tech in the last two decades. Particular areas of concern include, appointing women to board positions, encouraging more women to study and start careers in STEM subjects and challenging tech companies to actively encourage and support women's careers.

Joy Francis, Co-founder of Digital Women UK, said: "Research in the US on women and the digital sphere is very revealing in that women, especially women of colour, are driving innovation and enterprise. Yet in the UK you are hard pressed to find clear information about who these women are and the challenges they face. [Missing in Action](#) will showcase some of these hidden women who are largely operating within an information vacuum. Women tell us repeatedly that they feel unsupported and need access to modern mentoring programmes, funding advice and digital direction."

Jacqueline de Rojas, President of techUK and Computer Weekly's Most Influential Woman in UK IT, said: "Events like [Missing in Action](#) are vital. They shine a light on the challenges faced by women in the tech industry. While there are many exciting opportunities in the tech sector, currently very few women are attracted to and retained by our industry. Only by providing the right support and encouragement can we truly increase diversity and encourage more women into the digital world."

Event participants will have access to inspiring talks and coaching sessions with leading women in digital and STEM, such as Anne-Marie Imafidon, Head Stemettes at the Stemettes project, Joséphine Goube, Co-managing Director, Girls in Tech, and Lyndsey Britton, Co-founder of Campus North.



**DIGITAL
WOMENUK**
Training · Connecting · Campaigning

c/o Words of Colour Productions
14 Greville Street
London EC1N 8SB

Tel: 0203 176 5646
Email: info@digitalwomenuk.co.uk
Twitter: @digitalwomenuk

FB: Digital Women UK
www.digitalwomenuk.co.uk

Anne-Marie Imafidon, Head Stemettes at the Stemettes project, said: “It's important to make sure that women across the UK feel empowered to get digital and create sustainable organisations and companies in the field, to help solve problems in our society. We definitely need more widely publicised success stories of women and girls in digital enterprise. The more we can expose society to female role models, the opportunities in this space and ways to access them, the better.”

Professor Susan Marlow, Gender and Entrepreneurship Expert at Nottingham University Business School, added: “This exciting event breaks new ground by drawing attention to the invisibility of women as digital entrepreneurs. Showcasing such a high profile and prestigious range of speakers demonstrates that women are making a great contribution to digital enterprise; their ingenuity and innovation deserve far greater recognition. This event is a small step to celebrating such achievements.”

Over the two days participants will be part of roundtable debates, have the opportunity to engage with expert panels of digital academics and creative entrepreneurs and come up with solutions to improve the digital landscape for women.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Missing in Action - Women and Digital Enterprise in the UK is a two day event taking place at the University of Nottingham Business School on 21 and 22 November 2015. Priced at £25, the event is a collaboration between Digital Women UK, the Haydn Green Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Dr Angela Martinez Dy. Sponsored by NEMODE, an initiative of Research Councils UK (RCUK), and supported by the Gender and Enterprise Network, the aim is for the findings from the event to lead to future research and initiatives on women and digital entrepreneurship in the UK. For a full list of speakers, see the two day [programme](#).

Digital Women UK (www.digitalwomenuk.co.uk) aims to facilitate female creative practitioners to fully engage with social media and digital platforms to raise their profile, reach their desired audiences and showcase their work. It also campaigns to improve the digital landscape for women to pursue entrepreneurship in an equitable way. Launched in September 2013 at City Hall London, the initiative is hosted by social enterprise [Words of Colour Productions](#).

[The Haydn Green Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#), based in the Nottingham University Business School, was launched in June 2000 by Professor Martin Binks with support from the Department of Trade and Industry and the East Midlands Development Agency as The University of Nottingham Institute for Enterprise and Innovation (UNIEI). In February 2013, local charity The Haydn Green Charitable Trust donated £1.5million to the institute and it was renamed the Haydn Green Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

MEDIA CONTACT

For interviews or more information, email Joy Francis at joy@wordsofcolour.co.uk or call 0771 382 7372.