



Women in Travel CIC launches IWTTF Awards and conference programme for 2026

The International Women in Travel and Tourism Forum and Awards come to mainland Europe for the first time, with Utrecht as a stage for inclusion, leadership and change in the travel industry

29 June 2026, London / Utrecht: The International Women in Travel and Tourism Forum ([IWTTF](#)) will take place in mainland Europe for the first time this September and is today releasing details of its industry-leading programme and annual Awards.

Conceived by Alessandra LoTufo Alonso, MD and Founder of award-winning social enterprise [Women in Travel CIC](#), and now in its sixth year, IWTTF is an annual conference and community that has become renowned for its opinion-forming and progressive content on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) within the travel industry and beyond. Previous editions have taken place in Iceland, London and Dubai, and global travel industry leaders and former delegates have described the event as “transformational”, “inspirational”, “enlightening”, “incredible”, “provocative”, “engaging”, “uplifting”, and as a “very powerful movement and community”.

This year it will welcome delegates to Utrecht, with its annual Awards on the evening of 16 September 2026 followed by a conference day of insights and networking on 17 September 2026. Key sponsors include IWTTF Founding Partner [Intrepid Travel](#), Gold sponsors [BCD Travel](#) and [Interrail](#), Silver sponsor [DiamondAir](#) and more.

IWTTF Awards 2026

The IWTTF Awards recognise travel industry representatives and changemakers for their responsiveness, achievements, initiatives and progress in the DEI space. This year the categories have been revamped and streamlined to six, once again aimed at celebrating the excellence and leadership of both individuals and organisations, as follows:

Individual

- Woman Leader in Impact and Inclusion (Corporate and Entrepreneur)
- Woman in Tech and AI (Corporate and Entrepreneur)
- Ally for Social Impact and Community

Organisation

- DEI Courage and Resilience
- Inclusive Workplace
- Inclusive Business Practice

Entries are now open and businesses and individuals are invited to nominate themselves, their colleagues or peers via written entry form or video / audio application. The deadline for entries is 31 July 2026, and a judging panel comprising industry leaders and former winners will collate a shortlist of nominees. Winners will be announced at the Awards ceremony at [Union House](#) in Utrecht on 16 September, sponsored by Interrail.

IWTTF Conference Day

The IWTTF Europe 2026 conference is sponsored by BCD Travel and will take place at [Dotslash](#) on 17 September, comprising expert panels, fireside chats, deep dive talks, group sessions and networking. Under the overarching theme of *Inclusion Driving Growth*, the programme will explore what genuine inclusive leadership and true allyship looks like in 2026, travel's potential for positive impact and how businesses can embrace the growing phenomenon of the solo woman traveller. Delegates will also hear firsthand from travellers and professionals who navigate a system that was not designed with them in mind, and hear best practice case studies from IWTTF Award winners.

Alessandra LoTufo Alonso said:

"Doubling down on our commitment to inclusion has become even more critical in recent years, during which political headwinds have shifted and the easy consensus around DEI has become fractured.

Every session at IWTTF Europe will build on the last as we navigate important topics, from the strategic to the practical, to the personal and individual, always with commitment and accountability. Every person in the room will come away having heard something that challenges them, expands their thinking, and inspires a commitment to do at least one thing differently."

Zina Bencheikh, MD EMEA of IWTTF Founding Partner Intrepid Travel, said:

"We're delighted to be supporting IWTTF Europe once again and excited to bring it to a new audience in the Netherlands, as we grow our presence in the region with Sawadee joining the Intrepid family. IWTTF is always a stand-out event in the industry calendar, bringing together an exceptional range of speakers. And at a time when DEI is more important than ever, it's unafraid to tackle the topics that matter most."

Anya Turner-Schulz, VP of Global Marketing and Communications at BCD Travel, said:

"Some of the most valuable lessons I've learned about leadership and inclusion have come from communities that bring together diverse perspectives. They challenge thinking, broaden horizons, and remind us that we find better answers together. The path to more inclusive travel isn't always obvious. Often, we only recognize barriers when others help us see them. That's why initiatives like IWTTF matter. They create space for honest dialogue, awareness, and collective action."

Kavita Kooijman, Brand Lead at Interrail, said:

"Travel has the power to broaden perspectives, challenge assumptions and create meaningful connections between people and places. At Interrail, we see every day how travelling by rail encourages a slower, more immersive way of exploring Europe, one that helps travellers engage more deeply with local cultures, communities and experiences. As more people seek travel that reflects their values and leaves a positive impact, we're proud to support the IWTTF Awards and celebrate the individuals and organisations helping shape a more inclusive, responsible and forward-looking future for our industry."

Registration is now open to attend both the conference and the Awards, and booking ahead is essential with demand expected to outstrip capacity. Ticket prices are tiered to be as inclusive as possible, catering to corporates and individuals, and with a limited number of sponsored tickets for those without the means to pay. A combined ticket for both the Awards and the Forum costs €125 for corporate delegates, €99 for self-pay individuals. Forum-only tickets cost €99 for corporate delegates, €75 for self-pay individuals.

For more information on IWTTF Europe, please visit: <https://iwttf.com/>

To more information and to enter the Awards, please visit: <https://iwttf.com/awards>

-Ends-

Notes to editors

Images from previous IWTTF events are available [here](#).

[Women in Travel CIC](#) is a UK based award winning social enterprise that connects underserved, diverse female talent to employment and enterprising opportunities in the travel, tourism and hospitality industry. It partners with employers and organisations to provide talent services, education and events that foster a more diverse and inclusive industry.

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