



Best of DEI in the travel industry celebrated at the IWTTTF Awards 2024



London, 27 June 2023: Social enterprise [Women in Travel CIC](#) has announced the winners of the IWTTTF Awards 2024, which celebrate diversity, equity and inclusion in the travel, tourism and hospitality industries.

The [International Women in Travel and Tourism Forum](#) (IWTTTF) Awards reception was a sell-out event, taking place on a sunlit top-floor, balcony space at Expedia's office in Angel, London, last night (26 June). The host for the evening was BBC Travel presenter Carmen Roberts.

Reflecting Women in Travel CIC's work championing **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Female Leadership, Mentoring and Talent & Recruitment**, the award categories recognised both businesses and individuals for their awareness, achievements, initiatives and progress in the DEI space.

The winners were as follows:

DEI Professional – Individual

Winner: Annaliesa Chapman, Chief People Officer at [The Travel Corporation](#)

Finalists: Agnelo Fernandez (Cote Family) and Andrea Giroux (G Adventures)

DEI Professional – Company

Winner: [Red Carnation Hotels](#)

Finalists: Rise Travel Institute and Travel Matters

DEI Champion – Individual

Winner: Tiffany Casson, Client Relationship Manager, [Inntel](#)

Finalists: Michael Dominguez (Associated Luxury Hotels International) and Rebecca Jacques (BCD Travel)

DEI Champion – Company

Winner: [RISE Travel Institute](#)

Finalists: The Athenaeum Hotel & Residences, The Conscious Travel Foundation, Visit Santa Marta & Vivolo Café

Inclusive Talent and Recruitment – Individual

Winner: Sian Evans, Recruitment Manager, [Roadchef](#)

Finalists: Annaliesa Chapman (The Travel Corporation)

Inclusive Talent and Recruitment – Company

Winner: [BCD Travel](#)

Finalists: Invisible Cities

Allyship Heroes – Individual

Winner: Laura Roe, Senior Manager, E4B Events, Global Communications, [Expedia Group](#)

Finalists: Tami Fairweather, Fairweather Communications and Debbie O’Neill, Jules Verne

Allyship Heroes – Company

Winner: [Insight Vacations](#) .

Finalists: Trip.com and Visit Santa Marta & Vivolo Café

Female Leader of the Year – Entrepreneur

Winner: Nada Raphael, Co-founder, [Tourleb](#)

Finalists: Jessica Brooks (Eternal Landscapes), Iris Serbanescu (wmnsWORK) and Beth Santos (She’s Wonderful)

Female Leader – Corporate

Winner: Charlotte Shaw, Head Housekeeper at [The Athenaeum Hotel & Residences](#)

Finalists: Zina Bencheikh (Intrepid Travel), Linda Obi (Afrihealth Ltd) and Shayna Zand (WeTravel)

Female in Travel Tech – Entrepreneur

Winner: Stephanie Clare Boyle, Founder and Director, [Arwen Communications](#)

Finalists: Mags Sikora (Me Time Away), Grace Lucia McBride (Lucia)

Female in Travel Tech – Corporate

Winner: Sarah Hillman, Global Head of CRM and Data, [The Travel Corporation](#)

Finalists: Mercedes Blanco (The Hotels Network) and Shayna Zand (WeTravel)

Mentor of the Year - Individual

Winner: Quinn Meyer, Founder, [Crees Manu](#)

Finalists: Meera Dattani (Adventure.com) and Alexander Griffith (Visit Santa Marta & Vivolo Café)

Mentor of the Year - Company

Winner: Yousra Magouri, Engineering Manager – Communications Platform, [Expedia Group](#)

Finalists: Hollie Dunne, Diversity Travel

Female Mentee of the Year - Individual

Winner: Mandy Salonika, Founder, [The Adventurous Ewe](#)

Finalists: Jayni Gudka (Unseen Tours) and Jools Sampson, Reclaim Yourself Retreats

Female Mentee of the Year - Corporate

Winner: Madeline Scovotti, Sales Trainer, [Audley Travel](#)

Finalists: Jane Russell (The Travel Corporation)

Judges included leaders and thinkers from across the industry, from big brand names such as TUI and Audley Travel, recruitment companies such as Gail Kenny Executive Recruitment and Lightning Recruitment, media representatives such as Skift and Forbes, and academic establishments such as the University of Surrey. Each was carefully selected and assigned to an appropriate category to ensure integrity and relevant expertise across the board.

Alessandra Alonso, Founder and Managing Director of Women in Travel CIC and IWTTF said:

“It was wonderful to come together for the second year running in this fabulous space at Expedia to recognise and celebrate all of our deserving winners and finalists. In the spirit of Women in Travel, we are shining a light on the great work that is being done by individuals and companies within the DEI space, which often goes unnoticed and yet provides great opportunity for shared learning. It is not about being perfect, everyone is on a journey, but we should celebrate every small step because it brings us closer to a more inclusive and sustainable industry.”

During her opening remarks, Camila Kill, VP of Technology at Expedia Group, welcomed guests to Expedia’s top-floor meeting space and added:

“We were delighted to be hosts of the IWTTF Awards again this year and we congratulate Women in Travel CIC for providing this platform to learn from and support each other on this journey to a more equitable industry. I was particularly pleased to see allyship being celebrated. I have had the most wonderful allies throughout my life and career, all of whom have helped to bring me to this very special place at Expedia Group, where DEI and the empowerment of women is taken very seriously, with no better example than the recent appointment of our new global CEO Ariane Gorin, who was speaking at this very event this time last year. We will continue towards our goal of achieving binary gender balance of 50/50 by the end of 2025 - we are currently at 48% women - and operating successful initiatives like WELL, our employee resource group dedicated to women.”

Judges consistently praised the impressive work they had seen from the winners and finalists, with Shaun Taludker, CEO and Founder at Geotourist, saying:

"At a time when inequality is growing and disproportionately affecting certain groups, I'm proud to be part of the IWTTF judging panel to witness the truly inspiring examples of inclusion and allyship that attempt to not leave those people behind."

Jamie-Lee Abtar, Marketing Manager at Not in the Guidebooks, added:

"I was heartening to see the quality and level of detail that's being put into DEI efforts by lots of brands in the travel space, and equally it was lovely to see not just the usual names that are being awarded but also those that you've not heard about. I think that's what Women in Travel is all about – providing a springboard for individuals from a diverse background to have opportunities within the travel space."

Now in their second year, the Awards are part of IWTTF 2024, which also includes a day of industry-leading sessions and conversations on a range of topics from inclusive leadership to accessible travel, travelling in midlife and travel as a driver of positive change. Speakers and panellists include Darrell Wade and Zina Bencheikh (Intrepid Travel), Richard Thompson (Inclu Travel) and Angus Drummond (Limitless Travel), Nicky Lyle (Hotelplan), Klaudija Janzelj (TUI), Pegi Amarteifio (Small Luxury Hotels of the World), Shayna Zand (We Travel), Uwern Jong (OutThere), Nicola Degnan (Hays Travel) and FERIA Kazemi (Google).

Both the IWTTF Awards and the Forum business day were sold out, and all proceeds from the event go towards furthering Women in Travel CIC's mission of using the travel industry as a force for good, empowering women – especially those who are marginalised, vulnerable, and underrepresented – to achieve their potential. The social enterprise partners with employers and charities to provide visibility, confidence, access to training, mentoring and allyship programmes, and eventually employment and enterprising opportunities in the travel industry.

For more information on IWTTF, please visit: www.iwttf.com

For more information on Women in Travel's important work, please visit www.womenintravelcic.com

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A link to images is available [here](#).

A link to the criteria of each category and the judging panel is available [here](#).

What the judges said about each winner is outlined here:

DEI Professional – Individual

Winner: Annaliesa Chapman, Chief People Officer at [The Travel Corporation](#)

The judges said: Annaliesa demonstrated an exceptional level of her commitment to diversity and inclusion, driving various initiatives ranging from inclusive hiring practices such as diverse loops/interview slate hiring practices for founding the community group, education/awareness and training for colleagues and much more.

DEI Professional – Company

Winner: [Red Carnation Hotels](#)

The judges said: Red Carnation Hotels' have outlined various initiatives from inclusive hiring practices, fairness/bias programs in performance/talent to building communities and creating a sense of belonging. These commitments are supported by their CEO and reinforced through measurement.

DEI Champion – Individual

Winner: Tiffany Casson, Client Relationship Manager, [Inntel](#)

The judges said: Tiffany is proving to be a champion for Neuro Diverse inclusion. She is passionately engaging peers and industry partners to effect change from grass roots to the top in the travel industry and beyond.

DEI Champion – Company

Winner: [RISE Travel Institute](#)

The judges said: RISE really impressed as a company built with a fully DEI and justice-oriented culture in its DNA. A 360 degree take including recruitment, accessibility, training and collaboration are all addressed through the DEI lens.

Talent and Recruitment – Individual

Winner: Sian Evans, Recruitment Manager, [Roadchef](#)

The judges said: Sian clearly fosters an inclusive environment and contributes to the wider company DEI committee. Sian has found ways to expand their company's recruitment reach via their own commitment and partner organisations. Their own story is inspirational and this clearly drives a desire to remain proactive and forward-thinking, to the benefit of their organisation.

Talent and Recruitment – Company

Winner: [BCD Travel](#)

The judges said: BCD are setting the standard with technology-led innovations, coupled with intensive training for recruiters. They have strong links with partner organisations to provide workforce development programmes and apprenticeships, which have been very successful.

Allyship Heroes – Individual

Winner: Laura Roe, Senior Manager, E4B Events, Global Communications, [Expedia Group](#)

The judges said: A true advocate - supporting and promoting women and diversity seems to run through her veins. From mentoring, training, advocating, leading, raising awareness, challenging bias - she appears to cover all bases, working internally and externally at industry events, Her works starts from the grass roots - empowering young girls and helping them in their ambitions and development.

Allyship Heroes – Company

Winner: [Insight Vacations](#)

The judges said: They walk the walk - from internal celebration of DEI, through to Make Travel Matter on the ground - the consumer facing part of the brand. Meeting, supporting and celebrating women around the world! Insight live and breathe DEI. This is not a CSR "project" but something that is at the heart of Insight and which all employees sign up to and believe in, evidenced by the NPD it launched.

Female Leader of the Year - Individual

Winner: Nada Raphael, Co-founder, [Tourleb](#)

The judges said: Nada advocates for women in a part of the world where its impact is even more significant, with a focus on local and rural areas. Nada follows through on projects and initiatives that have both immediate results and long-term positive impact for the woman who are on the receiving end.

Female Leader – Corporate

Winner: Charlotte Shaw, Head Housekeeper at [The Athenaeum Hotel & Residences](#)

The judges said: Charlotte was the stand-out candidate because of her commitment to organising work opportunities for marginalised groups and providing personalised development programmes for young women in her capacity as Head of Housekeeping. She also gives visibility to a vital role in hospitality which is often overlooked and underrepresented.

Female in Travel Tech – Individual

Winner: Stephanie Arwen, Founder and Director, [Arwen Communications](#)

The judges said: Stephanie is an embodiment of helping others both in front and behind the scenes. Her talents in communication have been used to help others find their own voice and confidently represent. Her empowerment of others will no doubt create a legacy and a blueprint which will continue to benefit others in the future.

Female in Travel Tech – Corporate

Winner: Sarah Hillman, Global Head of CRM and Data, [The Travel Corporation](#)

The judges said: Sarah's dedication to fostering gender diversity and inclusion within the tech industry is exceptional. Her impactful initiatives demonstrate her proactive approach to addressing systemic biases, and her mentorship and advocacy efforts have significantly advanced the careers of numerous women, showcasing her commitment to empowering the next generation of female tech leaders.

Mentor of the Year - Individual

Winner: Quinn Meyer, Founder, [Crees Manu](#)

The judges said: Quinn is the deserving winner of the Mentor of the Year award due to his unwavering commitment to mentoring women and diverse individuals, exemplified through his impactful support of those in the WIT mentoring programme. Quinn's dedication to fostering professional growth and inclusion makes him an outstanding and inspirational mentor.

Mentor of the Year - Company

Winner: Yousra Magouri, Engineering Manager – Communications Platform, [Expedia Group](#)

The judges said: Yousra is the deserving winner of the Corporate Mentor of the Year award for her exceptional dedication to mentoring women and diverse groups from within Expedia and the broader industry. Her impactful initiatives highlight her commitment to fostering inclusivity and accessibility and her personal journey and relentless advocacy have inspired and guided hundreds.

Female Mentee of the Year - Individual

Winner: Mandy Salonika, Founder, [The Adventurous Ewe](#)

The judges said: Mandy has demonstrated great resilience, never giving up despite initial setbacks which she used as a learning opportunity. She has taken on board all the feedback and has had some

really positive results. Changing careers later in your professional life takes bravery and commitment which she has demonstrated throughout.

Female Mentee of the Year - Corporate

Winner: Madeline Scovotti, Sales Trainer, [Audley Travel](#)

The judges said: Madeline has taken on board her responsibilities as a mentee by being proactive and well prepared. She has sought out opportunities for her personal growth as well as giving back and as a result has had some impressive wins in her professional development and career to date. This relationship showed the best parts of allyship at work.

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About Women in Travel

Women in Travel CIC is the UK based, award winning social enterprise dedicated to empowering all women using travel, tourism and hospitality as a 'force for good', based on the belief that empowered women thrive and in turn, foster thriving communities. Women in Travel cic partners with employers and charities to provide all women – especially marginalised, vulnerable, and underrepresented – with visibility, confidence, access to training, mentoring and allyship programmes and eventually employment and enterprising opportunities.

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