



UK travel industry executive features as TEDx speaker

31 January 2025: Women in Travel's founder and MD Alessandra Alonso has delivered a prestigious TEDx Talk on the subject of tour guiding as a catalyst for an inclusive world.

Titled ***Crossing Borders, Embracing Cultures: Tour Guiding as a catalyst for an inclusive world***, Alessandra's talk focused on the value and integration that comes from taking a curious interest in the diverse communities on our doorstep and around the world.

TEDx is a grassroots initiative, created in the spirit of TED's wider mission to research and discover "ideas worth spreading." TEDx brings the spirit of TED to local communities around the globe through TEDx events, organised by passionate locals seeking to share ideas and research that will spark conversations. Competition is fierce, and talks are carefully selected based on the relevance and uniqueness of the subject, the authority and expertise of the speaker, as well as their delivery and story-telling skills.

The talk was delivered to a live audience in Walthamstow in October 2024, not long after the racially-aggravated riots that took place in the UK in the summer of 2024, but has become available to view online just this week.

Alessandra said: "The message from my TEDx talk is important now more than ever. We're living in times where inclusion is under attack and our progress towards a truly equal world risks being reversed. Social media driven polarisation is at the highest I can remember, and the rights of marginalised communities are being wound back. Our women-led tours, run by brilliant women from diverse backgrounds, are a way for individuals and industry to help break down barriers and foster a better understanding of their neighbouring communities."

[Women in Travel CIC](#) is a social enterprise that connects underserved, diverse female talent to employment opportunities in travel and tourism. Its Tour Guiding Academy teaches women – many of whom have been disconnected from the workforce – to design and deliver a short tour based on their own narrative and background, giving voice to different heritages and communities. Graduates include Vaishali Patel, who runs a [tour of Indian](#) culture, traditions, fashion and food in North West London, and Sefanit Meganiste who showcase the [Ethiopian Flavours of Shepherds Bush](#). The programme is available worldwide, with current trainees based in Scotland, Lebanon, South Africa and Ecuador.

Alessandra Alonso founded Women in Travel CIC in 2017 with a mission to create a more equitable travel industry. She has held roles at the European Commission, WTTC and KPMG before co-founding the Shine Awards for Women's Achievement in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality in 2004. She was recently listed as one of Skift's Women Shaping Travel's Future and has won awards for her lifetime commitment to gender empowerment.

Her TEDx Talk is available to view [here](#).

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[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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Images of Alessandra Alonso delivering the TEDx Talk are available [here](#).

Images of the Immersive India tour are available [here](#).