

≡ International Women's Day ≡



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# IWD breaching the barriers panel: What is it like being part of the tech industry today?

In the lead up to International Women's Day, we hosted a panel with some of our global colleagues to delve into their experiences of being a woman in the tech industry, and how we can inspire the next generation to pursue a career in tech. ☒

Joining the panel was Katy Winterborn, principal security consultant, Dana Hehl, senior VP of operations, Helen-Rose Whitehead, head of customer success and Jennifer Fernick, head of research in the US. ☒

To kick things off, we asked our panellists to talk about what it's like to

work in a largely male-dominated field, what they feel needs to change and what they think is great about working in the industry.✘

While all expressed different experiences of working in tech, a number of common themes came through in our discussion – including what needs to be done to encourage more women into the industry.

Katy Winterborn explores this in more detail: “We really do need to push on getting more women in more roles, but one of the problems is that there aren’t that many role models.

“Trying to convince a more diverse group of people to take up jobs in this industry is quite challenging when they don’t see people like themselves in the industry, or they don’t think it’s a job for a woman.

“I’ve experienced this a lot when speaking to people about joining the industry. I love this industry and have always felt very at home and I always try and convey this when I’m speaking to people. However, there is also a very serious flipside of hiring diversity in that it always tends to be✘an elephant in the room, and questions float around on whether or not to have quotas.

“It can be a very uncomfortable feeling not knowing if people are employing you because of your gender or because of your skills. To tackle this, we need to strike a balance between making sure we get the right people in the job while ensuring that workforces are diverse.”✘✘

Dana Hehl explores her experience of identity and the importance of breaking down stereotypes: “You have to search harder to find people you can identify with – it can feel isolating. I think working in an environment where you don’t see many versions of yourself floating around can lead you to question your abilities and your value a bit.

“I think there’s a fair amount of effort introducing children to STEM or STEM focused learning programmes, but I think the industry can do more to engage girls directly and show them that there are women doing these jobs and having fun, being successful, having families if they choose and making it work.

“This needs to be started from a young age – engaging with girls, and then giving young women opportunities and finally modelling examples of this in real life.”

Part two of four ‘IWD breaching the barriers panel: What’s the best piece of advice you’ve ever been given?’ will be live on Thursday 26 March.

The full webinar can be accessed [here](#).

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# About NCC Group

NCC Group exists to make the world safer and more secure.

As global experts in cyber security and risk mitigation, NCC Group is trusted by over 15,000 clients worldwide to protect their most critical assets from the ever-changing threat landscape.

With the company's knowledge, experience and global footprint, it is best placed to help businesses identify, assess, mitigate and respond to the evolving cyber risks they face.

To support its mission, NCC Group continually invests in research and innovation, and is passionate about developing the next generation of cyber scientists.

With over 1,800 colleagues in 12 countries, NCC Group has a significant market presence in North America, continental Europe and the UK, and a rapidly growing footprint in Asia Pacific with offices in Australia and Singapore.

## Contacts



### **Press Office - Group and UK**

Press Contact

[nccgroup@thisismc2.com](mailto:nccgroup@thisismc2.com)

+44 (0)161 236 1352