



Thursday 18 March

23rd AWARDS FOR ACHIEVEMENT KICK OFF THE ORGANISATION'S POST PANDEMIC RESPONSE

London – Women in Banking & Finance (WIBF) UK today held its 23rd Annual Awards for Achievement, as the organisation marked 40 years of operations, and pledged to continue its work at a time of substantial change for women working in the financial services sector.

Hosted by Kate Thornton, broadcaster and journalist, the event recognised achievements of four individuals and a team for their work promoting diversity and gender equality in banking and finance. With Citi as headline sponsor, the winners of the individually sponsored awards were:

- LSEG's Tech Star Award – [Leanne Allen](#) (KPMG)
- HSBC's Award for Achievement – [Joanne Hannaford](#) (Goldman Sachs)
- Credit Suisse's Future Leader Award - [Ayesa Latif](#) (Citi)
- Cynergy Bank's Champion for Women Award - [Helena Thernstrom](#) (NatWest)
- Goldman Sachs' Team Award for Diversity - [NatWest Gender Network](#)

Kristine Braden, head of Europe and CEO, Citigroup Global Markets Europe, who supported Citi's sponsorship of the awards, stated: "We would like to offer our heartfelt congratulations to all the shortlisted nominees and award winners for their considerable contributions to the organisations they work for and our industry. At Citi, we have a proud history of promoting diversity and gender equality. We believe it is crucial that we celebrate the achievements of extraordinarily talented women and their allies in banking and finance. Citi is delighted and honored to continue our support of these important awards."

An opportunity for the possible

The awards also provided a platform for many of WIBF's patrons and members to share how the Covid-19 pandemic has reshaped many aspects of life, positively and negatively, temporarily and permanently.

Speaking at the awards, Andy Haldane, chief economist of the Bank of England, an institutional WIBF member, stated: "The research from Women in Banking & Finance highlights that the pay gaps that exist in financial services are not a result of a lack of aspiration, but due to opportunity chasms. But these can be overcome by the removal of attitudinal barriers.

"Prior to the pandemic, flexible working was the exception rather than the rule. Now, we have the chance to purge the perils of presenteeism. While the degree of flexibility is a balance that organisations and individuals will have to calibrate, we have an opportunity to progress the conversation about a new social contract and support the careers of those hindered by opinions rather than technology."

Anna Lane, president of WIBF, added: “Following a year that proved that those in financial services could work productively from home, we stand at a crossroads. Companies have the chance to redefine how we work. In allowing employees to structure their days and build in the flexibility they need, the women who have to shoulder multiple roles need not step back from their careers. This is a time for opportunity and change. We can embrace new ways of thinking and working. There is no ambition gap, just an opportunity gap.”

The event flagged the findings from the initial report of the ground-breaking WIBF Accelerating Change Together research, which was conducted by The Wisdom Council, a financial services consumer insight and engagement specialist, and The London School of Economics and Political Science. This showed 94% of men and 93% of women working in financial services believed their jobs can be accomplished via flexible working. The findings also highlighted that women are more ambitious than men (62% vs. 47%), but are less confident that their ambitions will be achieved (53% vs 70%). That so many women foresee more barriers to success (79% vs. 58%) provided WIBF with the opportunity to use 23rd awards as a platform to choose to challenge companies as lockdowns ease and ahead of the launch of the second part of the research in June 2021.

The awards took place thanks to the support of Citi (headline sponsor), Cynergy Bank, Credit Suisse, HSBC, LSEG (London Stock Exchange Group), Goldman Sachs and Ten Lifestyle Group.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Established in 1980, Women in Banking and Finance (WIBF), is a not-for-profit, volunteer-led organisation, connecting individual members and institutions across the industry and the UK. In addition to our London office, we have branches in Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Manchester. Our mission is to bring a gender lens to UK financial services by connecting, challenging and inspiring our network to unlock the full potential of financial services for all. We seek opportunities to challenge and inspire as a thought leader, in collaboration with our partners and members (across all genders), to help deliver tangible change in our sectors.

www.wibf.org.uk/awards

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