1 - Debbie Forster
So, thinking back, I wanted to touch on a few things that were going on here. We understanding the flow of the day, we would love to have your questions coming in. So if you have any question on any of the topics that you want to flow in here, I'd love to have that. If you think about the rest of the day, we will be looking at a deeper dive thinking about how this data is reflected within the global market. We'll be looking at women of survey looking just as women within tech and what that shows us. We will be hearing from companies about how did they gather data? And how did they begin using it. So if you have questions for that, please put that in now. We also will be having sessions looking at where some of our companies are going that extra mile thinking about how do we measure, not just gather the data, but measure the effectiveness of what we're doing with that data in terms of our initiatives. We will then have a session this evening. In this evening session, we will be going deeper thinking about those other topics in terms of hiring and promoting. Across the two days, we'll be thinking about alternate routes, etc. So if you look later down within the session, if you think about if you want to sign up for other sessions, we will be recording this, but I'd love to have you join us for these other sessions. In thinking about the report, what we need to do is to think about how we move forward. This is about bringing together what is best practice and to drive it forward. What you'll see on the later sheets as we go through is this journey continues, you will have an opportunity to join us for drop-in sessions for working lunches, hackathons. There are topics that you believe we're not covering in enough depth, we hold bi-monthly hackathons where we will gather more best practice to expand our open playbook. Right. So then let's think about now where we are in terms of moving forward in the piece. What we have is a report that you're downloading that is 16% of the tech workforce. But we know that that operates primarily within a bubble. What we want to think about is how does that fit into a wider piece. And so to do that, let me put in a piece here. We want to try and think about what is happening in Europe. We want to understand what is happening with women. So next I'll be bringing Lexie back in a few moments to talk about where are we in relation to data in thinking more broadly. In the meanwhile, please if you can think about what we're doing on social media. We are on this works 2022. And it is on at @TechcharterUK for Twitter. Super. So I will be bringing us in. In just a moment's time to hear from Lexie and her panel from what's happening more broadly.

2 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Hello.

3 - Laurence Jacobs
Hello.

4 - Lexi Papaspyrou
So, hi, everyone. If you were in the first panel with us just earlier, my name is Lexie Papaspyrou. I'm the Chief Operating Officer at the Tech Talent Charter. And I'm really delighted to continue to be discussing some of the findings of the latest diversity in tech support with a fantastic panel that we have here today. The focus of this panel is wider picture. So what I'd like to do is dig a little bit deeper on some of the points in the report. But then to hear from some fantastic individuals who have got really interesting and some deeper insights in certain areas, then we can charter collecting our report. So I would love to

invite the rest of the panel to introduce themselves, starting with
Vanessa.

5 - Vanessa Vallely OBE
Hi, thanks for having me. My name is Vanessa Vallely. I'm CEO and founder
of the Arctic women, which is a platform that provides free resources to
women, the tech Our community has around 50,000 women. We do lots of
things, conferences, awards for women in tech podcast and such. We have
jobs boards, and so really bringing into community together but also that
collaborative piece of promoting what everyone else is doing within the
sector for women So I'm very proud to be a signatory of Tech Talent
Charter as well.

6 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Fantastic. Thank you, Vanessa.Diana, should we come to you next?

7 - Diana Akanho
Sure. Hi, everyone. Great to be here. I'm Diana Akanho. I'm Senior
insight manager at Tech Nation. So for those of you not aware of Tech
Nation, we're the growth platform, digital growth platform that supports
on scale-ups across the UK.

8 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Thank you, Diana. We'll come to Laurence next.

9 - Laurence Jacobs
Hi, good afternoon, everyone. I'm Laurence and I'm working at Ecovia. And
that's the Federation of, or a community of tech industry in Belgium. So
we've got more than 2000 member companies in the tech industry. We
represent about 300,000 people. So that's about 8% of the total workforce
in Belgium. And what do we do? Well, we actually try to accelerate
internal and external growth of our members. So lobby business
development services. And we have partnered up with as developers for
with NLDigital with TTC. Why? Because there is also a lack of diversity
and talent in the tech industry in Belgium. So that's why we're
conducting a European project to improve IND in Belgium.

10 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Fantastic. Thank you, Laurence. And let's go to Ilse next.

11 - Ilsie Lievens
Hi, everyone. Thank you first and foremost, for having me today. I'm very
excited to join this panel. So my name is Ilse Lievens. I'm a teacher at
Atevelde University of Applied Sciences and also a researcher for the
Level IT Out project. As Ross was just saying, so we are a promoter of a
European Social Fund project that wants to mainly work on improving
diversity inclusion in the Belgian tech industry. And for that, we've
partnered up with some of the organisations that are present here, and so
excited to talk about this at a more wider level.

12 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Thank you, Ilse. And finally, last but not least, Yeni.

13 - Yeni Joseph
Hey, everyone, thanks for having me as well. I'm Yeni. I work as a public
policy manager for NLDigital, which is the trade association of the
digital industry in the Netherlands. And we represent a bit more than 650

companies, ranging from big corporates to small SMEs. And of course, diversity inclusion is a very important topic for us. And therefore, we also launched a national taskforce on diversity and inclusion, where we work together with the Ministry of Economic Affairs to really work on a public private matter to work on this very important topic.

14 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Great, thank you, Yeni. So hopefully everyone can see our panel has a really interesting kind of mix of very broad and very international perspectives. And I'm looking forward to digging into the international view a little bit later. But I'd like to start off with them with a question for Vanessa if that's the right. Vanessa, I'm sure you heard in the previous panel that gender remains amongst our signatories, the area of greatest concern when it comes to diversity inclusion. Now the Tech Talent Charter is B2B. So the information we collect from signatories is all from a business lens. But obviously, your organization's doing a lot of work around speaking directly to women in the tech space. You did a fantastic piece of research, which if you haven't looked at it, it is a great piece in collaboration with (inaudible) tech talent charter, so do have a look at that it's referenced in the report. But Vanessa, could you tell us a little bit around what women are saying about working in tech and their experience of being in the thick of it when it comes to looking at lack of women in tech in general.

15 - Vanessa Valley OBE
So I'm going to reference the report that we did recently. And one of the most shocking statistics in that was the fact that one in five women are thinking of leaving the industry. Now we could kind of attach that to the stats are not that dissimilar from the great resignation. But when you actually get under the skin of why what was coming out in the report was the lack of clearance and consistent kind of pathways to progress within an organisation. It was two ways. You know, they seem to have an abundance of mentorship, which always seems to be the go to in terms of how do we fix the problem, but what was fundamentally missing was the sponsorship angle. So just to explain for those that may not be familiar with the differences, obviously, a mentorship. Mentorship is coming from someone with that subject matter expertise, that they can advise you and guide you. A sponsor is a different kind of relationship. A sponsor is someone that already knows enough about you, that's going to put your names and open up doors of opportunity for you when you're not in the room. So that sponsorship takes a little bit more effort, because, obviously, you have to be under the wing of a senior individual. They need to be opening up those doors of opportunity in terms of access to their network, access perhaps to work opportunity. But it's slightly deeper than a mentorship relationship. So that's the piece that was fundamentally missing. The lady said they didn't know what sponsorship was. They didn't think it was available within their organisations. You know, Even if they knew it, they didn't see it in its true form and how that would benefit them yet. When you look at some of the other survey respondents that had benefited from sponsorship, they absolutely attributed it to progressing in their careers. So there were things coming up around sponsorship. There were things coming up about lack of transparent pathways in order to progress. There was a little bit in there around male allies, and the fact that there was still elements where they felt their ideas weren't being heard, they were perhaps spoken over in terms of meetings. I think the stat was 75% of the women surveyed, saying at least some men within their organisations were not allies. So that's quite a big number. So for me, what was kind of coming

out of it is that allyship needs to be there. But what does that look like? The sponsorship needs to be there. Okay. So how do we pull those programmes together? And actually looking deep into, okay, what is the pathway if you're sitting in this current position as a product analyst? And where do you go from there? And is that necessarily linear? Or are there other areas that you can go into? So it's a lot of work for companies to do to look at those pathways. But I think until we do some of that stuff, the sponsorship, the pathway clearance, and knowing what that looks like, then we're never going to get women into the senior roles. And that's where we're missing. We have this issue, attracting women to tech, which falls back down to curriculums at schools and what that kind of looks like, they thin out at the middle level, where it's mostly tricky for women in their careers. And then as you get to the top, it's even thinner. And again, when we're talking about the 15% to 17% of women in tech, depending on which report you want to read. You also got to look at the diversity of those women. Because if we achieve a bigger number, either 30 or 40%, and everyone looks like me, then that's not progress. And that's not kind of, where we need to get to. And again, another thing that come up the report is that some of the women do feel that gender holds them back, in terms of career progression.

16 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Yep. Thank you, Vanessa. It's a fantastic report, I've definitely recommend having a read a bit. But some of the things that really stuck out to me being a person who just written the Tech Talent Charter report is as you said, diversity in senior positions is the second biggest problem that was reported by signatories. And from your research, I believe that we found that women were saying that sponsorship programmes were more effective for them in both programme types were effective, but sponsored it was more effective than mentorship. When it comes to developing people into senior roles. It's just interesting food for thought. And I'm glad you define what is sponsorship compared to mentorship because sponsorship programmes did not come up in the list of most impactful interventions that we were seeing signatories report to as a useful potential gap to address for organisations that are looking to improve, particularly gender diversity, but other types of diversity as well. I would love to bring Diana in on this piece as well. Because Vanessa, you've got the individual perspectives from women who are reporting their experiences. Diana, you have a really interesting research background in this area at Tech Nation from your work looking at founders. I know that you've looked at diversity lenses when it looks at when you were looking at where is funding going, and how is that being divided? What do you see from your research?

17 - Diana Akanho
Sure. It's a really tricky one. And actually, today, I was just reading up on the net worth rose review, which looks into female entrepreneurship. So it showed that so they've been doing this review since 2019. And the number of women-led businesses have grown by a third since 2019. And in 2021, for the first time ever, women-led businesses have surpassed on businesses that are led by men. So there's about 140,000 businesses created by women last year, and 10% of them were between the age of 16 to 25. So those would that will be considered youth. But we'll be looking at businesses. And when we're thinking about like tech businesses and investment, particularly, especially when we think about VC investment, they exist solely, well, mainly, actually

to put money into tech businesses. So they're thinking about the innovation and growth of tech. However, when we look deeper into the VC ecosystem, there's only about 13% of senior people in the UK investment teams that are women. So it's very low. And then when we start going down into different online diversity metrics, for example, if we look at those from black backgrounds is about 1%, when we look at those from my Asian backgrounds is about 8%. So it, it's very tricky, because those that are in senior positions in VC firms that are making those decisions about where money goes. If you don't really have a representation of society, it's what we're finding is that these businesses that are led by women or different ethnicities, they're getting less funding. So what we're seeing so typically in like a VC cycle or funding you have series A, which is a round, which is around maximum like $10 million, and then Series B, which is about, is like 10 to $20 million. So you see this is the about $20 to $50 million, and so on. And as you go down that funnel for women actually, as they're trying to raise more funding, the percentage of funding that goes to them decreases. So under Series A, when they're raising less than 2 million, it's around 6%. When they get to Series B, it goes to 3%. When it Series C 2%. And it's just decreases, whereas with men, that increases and you can see that proportion already. 6%, less than 10 million, okay, that's the highest for women. But that's so low compared to about 80% for men. So there's a huge issue around the type of so the VC ecosystem, how it's made up of men versus women and then the different ethnicities, but then also, yeah, so that is one of the main issues that we're seeing, and then how that funding is distributed because then what you find is people tend to fund businesses, where the founders look like them, or someone knows them or, Okay, this is easy and it's like a tick box exercise, and it's like, Okay, they went to the same school as me or they've come through a warm recommendation. And if they can make their job easier in terms of doing less homework, and they're like, Okay, this kind of fits what we used to invest in, and we know this works, then they don't really feel like they need to go outside of their comfort zone either. So this amount of money just go into the same type of businesses and then it doesn't mean that obviously, women are different people from different diverse backgrounds don't have the potential but it's just that they're not getting the opportunities.

18 - Lexi Papaspyrou
So I would love to jump alongside your opportunity, because I've seen in one of your reports recently, and we've touched on it a few times, and we had an audience question about as well around social mobility. And I think if I remember correctly, it's 43% of the VC funding that is assigned in the UK goes to people who went to one of four elite universities. And I think they're Oxford, Cambridge, Stanford and Harvard. And that came up from what you were just saying as well, Diana, this idea of people who look like me, people I know, people are in my direct network and people I talk to, and I'm really keen to get particularly Yeni, your thoughts on this as well, because obviously, Netherlands digital is a very strong startup scene in Europe. And you have a lot of organisations that would fit into this startup profile. Are you seeing the same kinds of patterns across the channel?

19 - Yeni Joseph
Yeah, definitely. Unfortunately, see, we see a lot of the same numbers that Diana just shared. Yeah, I think in the Netherlands, like in general, the business culture and innovation culture we have is, well, I mean, it's a very innovative and open minded country. I think it's also because we're a small country. So we have to be innovative, people like

to try new things. That's why we also see a lot of companies, whether it's through Brexit, but also before, a lot of international companies that set up shop in the Netherlands, because they like to use the Netherlands as a test market, which is great. But I also see there that when it comes to the numbers, that diversity and inclusion, there are still a lot of work to do. I think first of all, one thing that we definitely need to do better is also when it comes to data, so that's also something that we are working on right now also with some of you here. So I think that is a very important start also, from a policy perspective to really understand what those numbers are, and have the right metrics. But I think secondly, when it comes to more of the international talent as well, I mean, because we're such a small country, it is really important for a country like the Netherlands to also attract international talent and therefore also more diverse talent. And I think also there I've seen a few trends lately. I think, first of all, one thing that we are trying to do more is to put more efforts in also retaining international talent, for example, we have a lot of international students that come to study in the Netherlands. But then we also of course, we would like them to stay and work for some of our companies. So that is something that we put more focus on to retain that international talent, because I think also there because there's such a shortage in talent, we all know as companies, I think that we need to get in contact with talent soon, also when they are still in school or when they just graduated. So I think there's a big opportunity and something that the Netherlands is really focusing on to retain international talents, international students. And I think the other thing that is quite interesting, and as far as I know, it's a new scheme in the whole of Europe is a FISA scheme that has been launched last year by the Dutch government, which is focused on attracting international tech talent by combining salary with equity in the company because I think especially for a lot of startups and scaleups, it has been very difficult to attract tech talent and also to keep them, especially international ones. First of all, because salaries are very competitive and high. And as a start up or scale up, you cannot always pay that salary. And I think secondly, when it comes to retention, because a lot of smaller companies put a lot of efforts in attracting this international diverse talent but a lot of times, within a year or two years, they move to a big corporate, because they have better benefits, they have a higher salary. So it's very difficult for those small companies, although they want to invest in diverse talent to actually keep that talent. And I think a scheme like this, where you combine salary with equity, and attract them in that way also helps with retaining that talent in your company, and gives them a different motivation to stay with the company. And what we also see there that especially a lot of women are interested in a scheme like that, because they also want to work for a company where they believe in, and by giving them equity in a company. And it already starts, I believe, with 1% so it can be very low but it just gives them a different way of why they want to join your company. So I think those are a few examples that I think could also be very relevant for other countries around us, like the UK.

20 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Fantastic. Thank you, Yeni. And now we've had a couple of questions. And I would say to everyone that's watching, please do feel free to keep putting your questions through to us. As I'm sure you can see, every single person on this panel has got an international outlook. They either have an international network, or they're from a different country than

the UK, looking after tech needs and the digital needs in different regions. And one of the really exciting things and what the reasons why we wanted to have this panel in particular is that someone's actually asked this question directly. Does TTC take a bit of an international lens on any of our research? And we're really excited to say on this panel for the first time publicly, that actually it is something that we are now looking at. So what you might have seen is if you've read through the report, you'll notice that we surveyed around the kind the country of the signatories headquarters to try and get a sense of are there differences that stem from culture of where the HQ is based. And we also got a lot of emerging questions throughout this year around how we can better support signatories to navigate diversity inclusion challenges across borders. There are lots of organisations that do operate internationally and doing that across regions can be difficult for a number of different governance and legal reasons. And so I'd love to bring in Laurence and elsewhere at this point to talk a little bit about the kind of the fledgling sort of collaboration we have between Tech Talent Charter and all of the organisations here. So how do you feel on an international scale?

21 - Ilsie Lievens
Yeah, for sure. Thank you for that question I saw it appear. So from our point of view, when we started with this project, with level IT out, we immediately wanted to have the international approach. This is a European project by its nature, because we felt in Belgium as well, we are struggling with certain things, particularly when talking about shortage and talent in the tech industry but we knew that this was not just a problem in Belgium that this is something recurring across many European countries. And we also felt like there's so much to learn from other countries as well. And that's why from the get go, we wanted to involve NLDigital from the Netherlands and TTC from the UK, because we knew that there would be some practices that maybe you already applied that could also be applicable to the Belgium context, or if slightly adapted that we could apply that to the Belgium context. And just the fact that so much data has already been collected in the UK was for example, a huge inspiration to us to see that kind of industry benchmark and something that we also would like to replicate. I know, from a audience point of view, we definitely want to replicate that in Belgium, and also in the Netherlands, it would be very interesting for us to have such a big data collection as well, to really see as an industry, how are we doing? And how can we progress? But we also know, okay, we can focus on our own countries. But it's important, like you said, look across borders. I think for many tech companies, or just about all tech companies are looking outside of their own countries, or recruiting international talent from all across Europe. So I think it would be great to have this kind of collaboration to kind of see how we can collect this data together and to see which best practices to share. For example, from our project point of view, we're also in the midst of developing a platform quite similar to the playbook that TTC has to also from our Belgium perspective, to share any kind of any information, any sources that we might have to help people in the industry that really wants to work on DEI. I heard from the previous panel, as Debbie said, there's so many resources out there, as you said, as well, Lexie, there's so much information out there. We also want to create something very similar in our Belgium context, also similar platform. But I think, yeah, just doing this together and kind of leveraging this partnership and making it bigger, I think could have a big impact on the industry, across Europe. Definitely.

22 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Fantastic. Thank you, Ilse. So if anyone is operating in the Netherlands, in Belgium, who wants to get involved with this conversation around how we can share resources with different organisations in different parts of the world to support a collective DNI effort, we would be really keen to hear from you. So please do get in touch with Tech Talent Charter, so that we can try and facilitate some more conversation around that. I'd love to go to you, Laurence to ask a bit of a continuation of this question. We had a long conversation about it before this panel around what's the difference that you see looking at what's going on in Belgium versus the diversity inclusion efforts in the UK? Where is the UK getting it right? And where are we potentially missing an opportunity?

23 - Laurence Jacobs
Well, I think that the UK is ahead of us. So we've got a lot to learn from you and that's also one of the advantages of working together on this European project. Because we see Netherlands is ahead of us, I think the UK is ahead of the Netherlands. So we've got a learning curve. We have a lot of examples we can follow. So this is a good thing. And just to quickly tell you, the European project ESF project we're doing, we were actually aiming for three things. So first, we wanted to measure, we wanted to map out, what is the current state of IND in Belgium. So we wanted to feel the level of inclusion employees experience and what actions were already been taken by companies. The second part was what we wanted to incentivize organisations. We have set up a learning community of 10 companies that come together every month to share best practices. And we also had an inspiration day in October. And then the third action is what Ilse said, developing a platform where companies can go to, and in the survey we conducted to measure the current states, all the stakeholders in the company said, It's important to work on IND and the main reason was access to diverse talents. But it was a big unawareness, that IND actually leads to better company performance, to better innovation, to a better attracting talent. So that was one of the things I found in the TTC report this year, that the importance of creating awareness, that's actually the same what we saw in our survey. So and to be honest, it was also an eye opener for me that you please need to keep on working on awareness. It's like an ongoing process is not just that one, and then you take other actions. No, you need to keep on doing that. So I think that's something important for us to learn from the UK. Keep on working on awareness.

24 - Lexi Papaspyrou
So that's a really interesting point, because with our first panel, we can see that their activities are they rise, and then they fall off as an effective intervention depending on how mature that organisations diversity, strategies and tactics are working. I'd really love to rope Vanessa into this question a little bit, because we've had a really interesting question from the audience around sponsorship. So the question here is, how do you mitigate sponsorship sounding like or looking like favouritism? If a senior leader was focused on a specific individual? So that's something that we haven't really talked about from the point of view of collective bodies that are maybe earlier on in their diversity inclusion journey, like Laurence was just speaking about. How do we tackle something like that? Where if you're running a sponsorship programme, we're already ahead of the curve but how do you do it well?

25 - Vanessa Valley OBE

You do it in... Excuse me. You do it in cohorts. And that's the way that I've seen it done in many different companies. So you have a cohort of two or three individuals aligned to a senior leader. So there's no favouritism, it's not picking individuals out. And the beautiful thing about that, and I'll give you a prime example is that cohort will actually learn to mentor each other. So you've got the sponsorship at the top, and you've got the mentorship and I'll just say a quick story. So there was a gentleman, again, had a group of women that were talking about the need for sponsorship. So he said, Right, I'll take a cohort of three in terms of my kind of my sponsoree cohort. And he spent some time with them, a couple of meetings with all three ladies, looking at what they've done in the past, what they delivered, where they felt the gaps were, what they want you to see access to, and then he kind of did some onward inlooking looking around, Okay, so what those opportunities can I give these ladies. So one of the first things that he did is he took, he took all three along to Wahby, senior exec meetings. And as he walked in, he said, These ladies are part of a sponsorship group, they're just here to observe. And the ladies sat there, but he introduced them. So straightaway, they had access to his network. So they got to know what it was, they got just a minute of the meeting to say, this who I am, this is the department I'm working in, this is the kind of stuff that I'm interested in. So although he was their sponsor, all of a sudden now, by him using his own reputational capital in that room, those gentlemen, and there were a few women in that room was like, Oh, okay, they now can see what he's doing. So there was a little bit of why are we not doing this kind of stuff? They got to meet the ladies, they got to find out a little bit about them, and the ladies observed. And one of the other things that he did, which I thought was really interesting, is when he had to go off to a meeting in his particular role, which was like, five or six rungs above it was quite hierarchical company but he would give them examples of his work. So he said, Look, here's a bunch of papers that I've got read, and I've got to make an informed decision based on what's in these papers. Non-confidential stuff. He would give them to the cohort, and say, Have a look through those papers and tell me what decision you would make. No wrong or right answers. So he was actually sharing what it was like to do his role, even though it was much further up the stack with these ladies, they was getting exposure to that kind of work. And that led to kind of maybe some aspirational stuff, would they ever want to be in his role? Or what did that look like? So that's just one example of what I feel is good sponsorship. But also having a cohort of ladies that can work together as a team, they've got their own shared and safe space, yet they've got somebody out there, that's advocating for them in terms of their capability, and also helping them to grow their network because at the end of the day, that's how things work. It's who you know, and who gets exposure to you and what, and this is where it goes wrong because sometimes there are individuals that get more exposure than others. Perhaps because they're more extroverted, or they're more confident speaking up in rooms, which, when you look at the research, not to generalise for every woman, but we don't tend to speak up as much as we should in meetings. So they're not the people that are getting the attention that they need. So by having this advocate, that's actually being a voice for them is increasing their confidence, and then again, more likely for them to get involved in other meetings. So a long winded way of answering the question, but I'm very passionate about the topic as being absolute one of the fixes.

26 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Great. So when looking at sponsorship, work in cohorts, bring people together and it doesn't always have to just be women in cohorts, it can be cohorts across intersectional lenses. Now, I'd love to bring Diana in here because we had a really interesting conversation about this beforehand. The sponsorship model that Vanessa's just described, there are accelerators and relationships between businesses, between startups and established businesses that function in a similar way. So when we're looking at the kind of the VCN startup landscape, businesses have relationships with other businesses and for a fledgling business, having contact with other organisations that are either financially or in other ways invested in supporting fledgling businesses, that can be a really critical resource, particularly for founders who find themselves to be in a real minority group or the odd one out in a room. Diana, could you tell us a little bit more about how sponsorship, what that looks like if it's in a b2b relationship? And how might some of the organisations that are listening potentially be able to support diversity across the entire tech ecosystem through their relationships with other businesses?

27 - Diana Akanho
Sure. So even at Tech Nation, we have different growth platform, different growth programmes that we run. So for example, there's the LIBOR programme that just launched last year, and that for last year's cohort, it was looking specifically at founders that identified themselves as black. But generally across the different programmes. So that's one the LIBOR programme, there's rising stars that look at early stage businesses. And then we have sector specific programmes, like FinTech AI, for example, for what these specifically do with the cohorts that they get through the different companies that they have within that is, one thing to founders have said, which was really, really valuable to them and what Tech Nation does really well, is connecting them with different founders because the thing that people don't really talk about so much in which we saw with, for example, the founder of Monzo talk about his mental health is that you don't really have that peer to peer network or support. So why the b2b aspect is really important, what really helps, as Vanessa was talking about with the mentorship and having someone within like your cohort that's going through a similar thing. We see that within businesses. You're a founder, there's different challenges that you're facing, such as raising capital, hiring, those are the two main things that people say they have difficulties with, like access to finance and access to capital. If you have people within your cohort that you can speak to about that, but also understand what they've done before, what works, what doesn't, but also just having that support of someone that's going through the same thing as you because most founders do talk about how it's actually like a really lonely journey. There's the highs are highs and the lows are lows. There's many times that people want to give up but that support from your peers is really important. So where businesses can help is really providing that solution where founders can connect with other founders. So that is sort of like b2b, but also just thinking more about it from a peer and network point of view.

28 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Fantastic. Thank you. And Yeni, I'd love to come to you on this as well, because again, Netherlands digital, is a real kind of nurturing industry collaboration, for this type of work, are you finding the same needs are true? And are you finding that there's interesting crossover, I guess, for the UK tech centres, and those on the continent, What are the

similarities? And where can we potentially foster better relationships to support this type of growth in diverse groups in tech?

29 - Yeni Josephs
Yeah, well, I think first of all, and I think it has been mentioned a few times already, I think, when it comes to people working in tech, and I think, especially in the tech sector, a lot of people don't even like, a lot of these companies, they they work cross border. And I think also therefore, what we see in the Netherlands is that a lot of the companies that we are now trying to convince and work on DNI, already work on DNI in countries like the UK. And what I see especially a lot of the tech talents in their teams, and also the diversity officers and everyone who really wants to work on a topic actually says it's super helpful to know that their own company or the company they work for already works on this topic in another country. And internally, it's easier to convince their own peers to therefore work on the topic. So I think that's one of the reasons why we should collaborate more, to also understand that a lot of the companies that we work for have offices all over Europe, the world and when you're already measuring certain things, or when you're already working on certain actions in one country, why not do it in another country, because I still think there is still a lot to learn. And I think also on the other hand, that's like Diana was saying as well, that when it comes to understanding what's going on that really learning from peers is the most valuable part, it's very important to get experts in who can explain certain definitions and explain why it's so important to work on diversity and inclusion. But I think in the end, learning and hearing about the journey of peers who've been through the same whether it's a founder or a junior, a woman in tech, I think that is very valuable. And I think especially also focusing on the junior part is really important, because what I see when it comes to visibility, a lot of times it's about very senior roles. And I think it's also very important if you're a young woman in tech who is just starting off her career to also learn from others, who are maybe only five years ahead of where you are right now to also give you a realistic goal, because I think also women and also other underrepresented groups, a lot of times when they hear a CEO speaking, they're like, Okay, that's great, but that's not for me. And when they hear someone else who just like turned from a junior into a senior role, then it's way more within their reach they feel and then it also becomes more realistic. So I also think there when you look at the cross borders, it's also really important to share best practices and stories of peers who are really in the same range of you.

30 - Lexi Papaspyrou
So what we're hearing from everyone, I think, here is this theme around advocacy and networks. And we've heard that both in terms of the problems with achieving good diversity, whether it's in the VC space or in the employee demographics. There's this issue about trying to advocate and support people by building connections between people, whether it's businesses or individuals. Yeni, you were just talking about this from the point of view of people starting out in their careers and I'd love to bring, Ilse, in on this because obviously you work for a university and obviously you speak to a lot of, I know we've spoken about this, a lot of women who are trying to get into the tech space and are seeing this kind of need. What does that look like at our higher education moving into the tech space for work? What does that look like?

31 - Ilsie Lievens
Yeah, thank you like C&D, I was just talking actually to a student of ours, who went to an event, kind of like an initiation and growing events, who said that she didn't even know that that was out there that there would be something achievable to her. We see if you have any kind of sessions for students on digital skills, they're always very interested in that. But anything to do with mentoring with representation is hugely important for our students, actually. Whenever we bring in guest speakers, whenever we use case as examples, of people who aren't often represented or don't always see themselves represented, we always see huge boost in motivation and engagement of those students. So for them, it's really important to see people represented such as themselves. We have some great initiatives here in Belgium as well, I think that might be the ultimate exists in other place or something like a seat at the table, we have some of our students contribute to that as well, where they recently had a kind of speed date with a CEO. A hundred CEOs who did speed dates with a lot of very diverse young talent. For them, it's a great opportunity to get to meet with others and to be able to create that network, as was mentioned earlier, so important to make sure that not all of our students have the same networks. Whenever we haven't assignments, or even internships and things like that, we just see that certain students have a much more difficult time getting into certain spaces. So yeah, building those kinds of communities or aiding students to build those communities and networks is so important and something that we I think, can even be something that as Yeni also said, I think companies can also reach out a bit more to schools, and help them get students in those communities a bit quicker and do kind of those initiatives like one that my student was talking about just getting a bunch of people to come and visit them and to create that network, to create that sense of community. I think there's still a lot to do there as well.

32 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Yeah, fantastic. And just if anyone's interested in looking at that route tech, She Can is one of our sister organisations at Tech Talent Charter, and it's well worth looking at. So I'm going to do a whip round of everyone in the panel now. And this will be probably one of the last questions that I'll ask. We've heard about this broad idea of sponsorship, when it comes to diversity and inclusion across wherever you are, it's this idea of how do you forge connections that are meaningful and translate into true value for a person who is trying to progress from an underrepresented group? So I'd love to do a whip round. What are the things that organisations or people can or should be doing, to try and facilitate these sponsorship type relationships to emerge? So Vanessa, we'll go to you first.

33 - Vanessa Valley OBE
It's really interesting, Lexie, because we've been doing a number of Recordings for a conference that we've got coming up and I've been talking to a number of senior leaders. And also we've been talking to a number of community members. And the biggest thing that comes up is the ability to listen. To have channels where you can talk to the women in the organisation about their frustrations. So whether or not that's spinning up, we need mentorship, we need sponsorship, we need on the job training, we need greater visibility to opportunities, all of those different things, it all boils down to one thing, and that's the channels by which organisations listen to those employees. So whether or not that's setting up a women in tech ERG. So an employee relations group

that can feed up some of that grassroot kind of this is kind of what we need. Whether it's something like that. Whether or not it's skip level lunches. So just to explain what they mean, having a senior individual in a room with 10 or 15, women in tech, that's talking about their own challenges, and what the company could do to move the needle is just creating those listening channels. So I think sponsorship is absolutely fundamentally important but there are so many other things around the periphery, obviously, which surfaced our report that also needs addressing. So a big hill to climb, but when we can get to no doubt, but it all starts with the ability to just have a listen.

34 - Lexi Papaspyrou
You know what, that's something that's completely coming through in our report as well. I think gathering employee feedback and listening for inclusion was in the top six across every single top performing diversity lens that we know.

35 - Vanessa Valley OBE
Just to add to that, annual surveys, they need to go. There are a point in time, they're at the end of the year, depending on how people are feeling is you've got to have that ability to be agile in terms of how you collect that feedback through events, through SharePoint, through online team chats, whatever it is that you can actually get that feedback in real time. And then show your employees that you're listening and you're doing something about it as well. So the follow up is equal. It's all well and good listening but how do you talk back to say, yes, we've heard you, and this is what we're doing because that's where you get the momentum and that's where you get the traction.

36 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Yeah, absolutely. Let's go to Diana, next. Diana, building powerful relationships to support diversity and inclusion.

37 - Diana Akanho
Sure. So yeah, building on from listening, 00:45:07,000 --> 00:45:09,580 I think from there, it's about building trust. Because if you are listening to what people are saying, and you're acting upon it, people will trust that there will be some action as a result. So I think it's... so with that comes transparency within your workplace, understanding how things work. So, for example, progression, why is it different from one person to another? There needs to be like transparency around those routes, so people understand how things work. And then trust will naturally be built within an organisation because when there is a lack of trust, things that the employer, employee relationship it's just not stable. It's unstable, so whatever... Unstable not instable. So whatever you do say, what is the likelihood people are going to trust that something is going to happen? If people are not listening or if there's no transparency around processes within an organisation.

38 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Thank you, Diana. We'll go to Laurence, next. Is another b2b focused organisation building supportive networks?

39 - Laurence Jacobs
Well, I would like to talk about women, for example and themselves.
I mean, we need to speak up as well. We need to reach out and be open about what we want to achieve. And if it doesn't work, I mean, don't give

up for the first time. I think it's really important to think about what are you looking for in a sponsor? It's not only somebody you choose for you or a mentor, somebody who sticks along the side? No, it's really somebody who's willing to take the first steps with you, that's got your best interests at heart, and who really wants to make publicity for you. Lately, have been seen this visual a lot on social media, like women are over mentored and under promoted? I think I mean, that's exactly what it is. We put a lot of focus, most of the times on women they need to be mentored but at the other side, I mean, there's the rest of the organisation that needs to do their part as well because even if your mentored, how should I put it? If you come into a company where the rest isn't willing to take you up, then even if you're mentored, it doesn't get you further in your path. So I think be open about what you want to achieve and think about what you want to find in a sponsor that there's a match.

40 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Yeah, let's go to Ilse and then I'm going to come to you Yeni for a final quick question. Ilse, from particular from the students, the students that you work with, what does it take? What should employers be doing to create really strong sponsorship opportunities for them?

41 - Ilsie Lievens
As I was already saying, indeed, creating that community and reaching out to those students quite quickly. A lot of students right now really have quite high focus on DEI would say, a lot of companies that are not paying attention, and are not having that focus on diversity equity inclusion, having any statements or any values on that are going to lose some of that high school's young potential. So really just focusing more on truly creating an inclusive culture. I loved what was said here earlier for this final question of listening and actually taking actions based on what people are saying, because that's sometimes even when collecting DEI data is a struggle, that people don't want to disclose any data anymore, because they feel like nothing's happening with the data. So I would say really practising what you preach, and really putting a lot of effort into actually creating an inclusive culture and being true to that and actually sticking to that. I think that's something that a lot of young people nowadays are looking for. And looking for somebody, as Laurence was saying, as well, a sponsor that matches them, that will help them that is going to give them opportunities that otherwise might be difficult for them to reach but it's going to help them progress and what their career path might look like and what they want to progress in action.

42 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Great. Thank you, Ilse. So I'm going to close up here, but I'm going to throw a quick question to Yeni. We've heard throughout this panel, there's this broad piece about listening. When we're talking about listening, we're talking about hearing what people are saying, but often that involves data. We've talked about data as well and the importance of data, both in the first panel and this panel. One of the questions that came in which we haven't got time to go through today, but I want to just touch on is this idea about how do we navigate these DNI data challenges when in some places, it's not legal to collect certain types of data and when organisations are operating cross border, that can be really challenging. So we've heard that obviously, UK is doing better than some neighbours in some areas and not so well in other areas but broadly speaking, we've got quite a mature discourse in the business community

around diversity and inclusion. Tech Talent Charter, Netherlands Digital, we obviously have that conversation about how we can support each other with our kind of collaborative work here to try and create guidance that will be relevant across border. So I guess, if we were having a bit of a call to action around how we can improve diversity and inclusion with that international lens, what's your call to action for the audience before we sign off today?

43 - Yeni Josephs
Yeah, thanks for this question. And I think it's completely true, what you're saying. I think my call to action would be that as I was mentioning earlier, that in the Netherlands, we also just launched a diversity and inclusion benchmark for the digital industry. We're doing it for the first time, we're learning a lot from TTC, but also there if you are watching here, and you are from one of the organisations that is already joining TTC, and also has a location in the Netherlands or you know a company you work with, with a location in the Netherlands and you're interested in joining the Dutch benchmark as well. Yeah, please reach out because we're still looking for companies and I think, as you were also mentioning, Lexie, that it's also for you, as a company very relevant to compare your different locations, and to see how they're doing and also how you can exchange a lot of the knowledge from your own organisation or from other organisations across the border to improve.

44 - Lexi Papaspyrou
Fantastic, thank you so much, Yeni. So that shout out, that final shout out if anyone is operating in a region that is not currently being covered by the UK benchmarking, please get in touch with us. We already have Agoria from Belgium that we're working with, we have Netherlands Digital with Yeni, who've been on the panel today. So with that, I'll say thank you very much for our fantastic panel, a really wide ranging panel looking at what's what's the same and what's different. So thank you all for your time, and Debbie, back to you.

45 - Debbie Forster
Hello, everyone. So it's nearly the end of our session today and I'm nearly to the end of my bucket of tea. Let's figure out where we are, where we're going. As promised, we've looked at the reports, I've had some requests, can't we get the report in such a way that we can download it, that it is more accessible, etc. We will be putting that together and try to work in those accessibility issues in the coming weeks. We are behind the scenes a very small startup in a not for profit way so we're pedalling as fast as we can but I'm delighted anyone tells us they want more so they can read more of the report. Absolutely. We've also had some questions asking about and we saw it cropping up here, what are we doing in schools? What are we doing about university education? What are we doing about upskilling? You know, the basic digital skills within the workplace. Please know, that when we work as the Tech Talent Charter two things. One, we know that we do need to look at the entire pipeline, and that's vitally important. But also remember that from the first moment that we founded this, one of our mantras was we will not reinvent the wheel and that's why we work with partners. So when people are saying, well, what are we doing and supporting women etc. And women's focused events, those are vitally important. That's why people like Vanessa are vital important partners to us, for we are tech women. If we're thinking about what happens in schools, you heard that Lexie mentioned there's an organisation called Tech She Can. It is a charity like us, it is companies coming together to think about what can they do

in that earlier space, on early inspiration in schools, in apprenticeships, etc. If you have any question, look on our website, where our key partners, you'll find out where you can link into Tech She Can. When we think about universities or post school education, we have a number of providers in the space who are signatories and always reach back to us as a provider so we can share that out. But we also work with Institute of Coding, this was given funding from government to look at how to reform what is happening in terms of computer science education, post school education, further qualifications, and now the boot camps. But that is again about reimagining, removing barriers so that we can get more people of all different ages and backgrounds in through tech. So have a look at an Institute of Coding. Some of you know if you're larger employers or even smaller employers, you have people in your workforce, who if you could just get them those basic business digital skills, then they'd be able to access those other pieces. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. Our partners, futuredotnow, are companies coming together to look at how we can work in that space. So I'd say to you in that respect, we've also had questions across the year as Lexie said, of why aren't we going global? What are we doing about global? We would never just jump into a new country, we will never go for global domination. We work with you as employers and with partners to understand what lifts easily from Tech Talent Charter into other things, what needs to be done slightly differently. So as Lexie says, If you are interested, either in looking at what's happening in Belgium, in the Netherlands, we would connect you straightaway and I'd urge you to be part and support what's happening there, as it then expands into Europe. But we will be holding sessions across this year. Closed door sessions with signatories can come along, to think about what is happening in terms of global data gathering. What is happening in different markets. So we're happy to convene those spaces to bring you together as employers to understand where we're going next in that respect. Okay, so what does that mean for today? We are reaching the end of this working lunch. I'd love it if you joined us this evening. This evening, we're going to have more of our employers rather than our experts on the outside. These are employers beginning to talk to us, to think about what is interesting in this space. We're going to be hearing from Beazley from an insider's view. What does things like the report and the festival mean in the day to day life of their company. We will be looking at hearing from companies about different stages of the journey. Remember, I promise you as the Tech Talent Charter, what we will always try and do in our sessions, have people from small companies, medium sized companies, large companies, look at companies who are early in journey been there a while, been there very long while and can share what they're learning. So we'll be looking at how are companies using data and those of you that were asking questions about, Well it's fine to measure diversity, but what are you doing about inclusion? What are you doing about engagement? How are you doing it? You'd want to join us for our session this evening. You'd also want to look at some of you are getting to the point of you beginning to put together initiatives, beginning to think about what's next. Anything we do in business, we'd measure impact, wouldn't we? We'd measure to see if there's a return on investment. This evening, we'll hear from companies that are beginning to do this and are beginning to be able to be surprised by some of the things the data has. I'm delighted that you heard today, some of those key issues around things like the leadership and management, how are we increasing? We just heard from the last panel, some super suggestions on things to do in terms of increasing representation in those areas. And you heard Edleen and you heard Jacqueline throwing down the gauntlet that better move up the chart by next year. If you're not sure how to do that,

where to do that, you want to join us tomorrow for the working lunch.
Equally, there were three or four years ago, we talked about flexible
working and on a key way to do it. And a lot of companies just said it's
too hard. We could never make virtual work in the tech teams. Well COVID
broke that. What we want to do is two years later, to see what have
companies learned about diversity inclusion in relation to that flexible
working in all of those dimensions of flexibility. So we'd love to see
you for that. You heard the discussions about alternate routes. Some of
you've noted that this has to be part of something long term, not just
short term. If you're not sure where to begin, if you don't know what's
out there, how you might access, join us for the session on alternate
routes. And then last but not least, some of you in the room and you've
been asking us since last year want to understand, what could we do in
terms of neurodiversity, disability, LGBTQ+, social mobility, how do we
move forward? What we'll be bringing to you in the last session is
hearing from companies who've taken what they've learned from working in
gender and expand it into these other areas, to bring down barriers to
work with people in the company to make it more inclusive from those
other perspectives. Okay, so if you haven't signed up for one of those
sessions, cursor down, sign up for the sessions. We want you to join us.
If you want to, we're going to take the time out before this evening, if
you want to keep listening, we will have some interesting content. We
will have some of our best tasters from past sessions in the air and some
top tips from a range of employers that you can just pick up on and
listen as we do it, which should be hitting your inbox. If this is the
only session you've signed up for, I really want to know what worked,
what didn't. Now I've made it super easy. We've worked with the team.
There are faces, you just have to choose which face you want. The happy
smiley face, the grumpy it didn't work face. Please fill that in. Please
let us know what's working in that respect. Love how some of you are
already sharing things on social, sharing questions on social, please
keep that up, bring that across to us. And then last but not least, carry
on the conversation. If this is the last session for you and you're not
going to be joining us for the rest of the festival, do tune in later.
We'll give you some links where you can hear some of it again. But don't
make this your last conversation with us. If you are already a signatory,
think about come back to us about that global project, thinking where we
go from here. Think about joining a hackathon. Some of you have said,
we're using data tools, we use them really effectively. Some of you want
to learn about it. Well, we're having a hackathon looking at how do you
use data lead tools to attract diverse of talent, but that's sponsored
for Best by CWJobs. We're looking at how what are the creative approaches
to developing your diverse leadership pipeline. So what you heard today
in the session, if you have stuff to share, join us for a hackathon.
We'll be working, KPMG is sponsoring a hackathon, looking at how do we
create a really inclusive culture that allows neurodiverse people to
flourish within our tech teams. And last but not least, we'll build on
what we're going to be talking about the session. What are the systems?
What is the culture? How do we support inclusive hybrid talking? So if
you join any of our sessions, and you're thinking, Hey, I know a lot more
about that, why aren't they talking about this? Then you want to join one
of our hackathon teams. And then have a look at our playbook. Have a look
at what you see in the report. See what you need. Join us for a drop-in
session to carry on that conversation. What's working for you, what's
not, how can we help you and if you haven't joined the Tech Talent
Charter, that's a whole different conversation. We'd love to have you
join. It is free. It is for any organisation that has a vested interest
in this space. You can be an employer, you can be a supplier, you can

represent a underrepresented group within this place. Come in the tent, join the choir, learn how to sing, allow us to help you share what you know is working, learn from others in the space to collaborate and change the entire shape of this tech ecosystem. It's free to join. It's quick to do you can we have some signup sessions that you can look to just come have some questions and answers about that. Everyone, crazy time of year. Crazy day, crazy world. Thank you for taking two hours out of your day to join us for this working lunch. I hope to see you again in a few hours time for our evening cuppa, and tomorrow. If not, don't make this a soft conversation. And then as you heard from this morning, be bold, move forward. It's time. There's no cavalry. There's no one coming to rescue us. We need to take action today. My name is Debbie Forster. I am the CEO of the Tech Talent Charter. Thank you to Beazley as our headline sponsor. Thank you to my principal partners and my team behind me who makes this work. I will see you. Shh, I'm going to end seven minutes early. You don't have to tell anyone else what you do with these seven minutes. It's our Tech Talent Charter gift back to you. I hope to see you this evening. Bye bye.