



Women in tech still feel underpaid, underrepresented and underfunded, with family balance becoming an ever increasing concern

Dublin – October 2, 2024

Today, Web Summit announced the findings of its fifth global [women in tech report](#), which show that women in tech remain underpaid, underrepresented and underfunded.

Nearly a third (29.6 percent) of 1,000-plus surveyed women cited funding as a major hurdle with regards to starting a business, reflecting global trends of women-led startups struggling to secure venture capital.

More than half of the respondents noted a lack of women in leadership roles, with nearly 51 percent feeling unfairly compensated compared to men. Balancing a career and family life is an increasing challenge, with sexism in the workplace still a reality for a majority. Despite this, close to 76 percent of surveyees feel empowered to lead.

Known as the event where the tech world meets, Web Summit aims to spark debates that help us understand and address these ongoing issues. Web Summit's **2024 Women in Tech survey** was conducted during the summer among women who have joined our women in tech programme over the past number of years.

Key findings:

- A substantial **50.8 percent of women reported experiencing sexism** in the workplace, a figure that has shown little change in recent years.
- Nearly half (**49.1 percent**) of women in the tech sector feel pressured to choose **between family and career**, marking a 7 percent increase from last year.
- More than **75 percent of respondents acknowledged feeling the need to work harder than their male counterparts**, a trend that has remained steady over time.
- Respondents identified unconscious gender bias, balancing career and personal life, the scarcity of female role models, imposter syndrome, lack of support networks, and difficulties in funding as their most significant challenges.
- In spite of challenges, close to 76 percent of respondents would feel empowered to pursue and/or hold a leadership position.
- More than 80 percent of surveyees stated that there is a woman in senior management in their company, with **68.2 percent reporting that a woman holds a C-level position**.



- There's **optimism around AI's potential to drive positive change**. More than 68 percent of respondents have a positive outlook on the impact of AI and automation on gender equity.

"Why do we have 1,000 women-founded startups joining us at Web Summit this year, and why does that number keep growing? This is the question that comes to mind when I see the survey results showing women are still facing the same challenges", prefaces Carolyn Quinlan, VP of community at Web Summit.

"It's frustrating that issues like sexism, unfair pay, imposter syndrome, and work-life balance keep appearing—it often feels like we're stuck in the same conversations. Yet, I can't help but feel hopeful. More women are stepping up, leading, and bringing their startups to events like Web Summit", she continues.

"Since 2021, Web Summit has maintained a near parity ratio in attendees, and the rise in female participation and women-founded startups gives me hope that we can push these conversations forward and create a future where technology is a space for everyone, not just a boys' club", concludes the VP of community at Web Summit.

Momentum for change

The call for change is evident. Approximately 56 percent of women feel the industry isn't doing enough to tackle gender inequality, and 69 percent are dissatisfied with their government's efforts. In spite of the lack of initiatives, more women are empowered to step into the spotlight as opportunities arise. Close to 76 percent of women who answered Web Summit's survey say they feel empowered to hold or apply for a leadership position.

Web Summit has seen a **remarkable rise in women's participation since launching the Women in Tech Programme in 2015**. Designed to tackle gender inequality, the program offers discounts to encourage more women to attend and participate, making events more accessible, inclusive, and helping to foster a more diverse and innovative tech industry.

In 2016, just a year after the initiative's launch, 42 percent of attendees were women, up from 25 percent in 2013. By 2021, women outnumbered men for the first time, reaching 50.5 percent. Since then, Web Summit has maintained a near parity ratio

Beyond the Women in Tech programme, **there has been a significant increase in women founded startups**. This year's Web Summit 2024, in Lisbon, will break records with 1,000 of the 3,000 startups attending as part of the startups programme.

At Web Summit Rio 2024, 45 percent of the 1,000 startups had a woman founder. Similarly, at Collision 2024, more than 44 percent of startups were women founded, which represents a 14 point increase from 30 percent the previous year. At Web Summit Qatar 2024, 37 percent of attendees were women, alongside 30 percent women speakers and 31 percent of the 1,000+ startups were founded by women.

The growing number of women founded startups participating in Web Summit highlights the increasing drive among women to connect, innovate, and lead.



One participant emphasised this point, stating, *"Being the only woman among male peers in a senior management position allows me to bring other women into similar roles. I have the opportunity to open more spaces for the next women who arrive."*

There is also optimism about AI's ability to drive positive change, with over 68 percent of respondents viewing its impact on gender equity as beneficial. This perspective aligns with recent [insights](#) from PWC, which show that when used responsibly, AI can expand talent pools, address bias in talent management, and improve workplace collaboration.

Web Summit is committed to fueling these vital conversations about change through its speakers, stages, and networking opportunities, providing a platform for women to drive progress in the industry.

More details and insights from the women surveyed can be found at

Web Summit's 2024 State of Women in Tech Report.

An echo of global trends

Web Summit's 2024 Women in Tech report aligns with broader international trends. According to 2023 data from Nash Squared, women still only make up 14 percent of tech leaders worldwide.

In major companies women occupy just 26 percent to 29 percent of leadership roles, as noted by the World Bank. Female representation also continues to fall below 50 percent in these companies, underscoring the need for change highlighted by Web Summit's survey respondents.

As shown by Web Summit's report's findings, funding also remains a critical barrier for female founders, with close to a third of respondents (29.6 percent) identifying it as one of the most pressing issues facing women in tech. An analysis from the [World Economic Forum](#), based on Pitchbook statistics, found that women-only startups received just 1.8 percent of VC funding in Europe and 2 percent in the US in 2023. Similar data from [Wamda](#) shows that women-only startups received just 0.47 percent of funding in the MENA region in 2023.

Some stand out responses from the survey included:

"I don't belong to the boy's club."

"I feel we should drive gender equality from the top down. My government is still majority male."

"Without effective childcare support in place, it makes it more challenging for women who also want to have a family to fully participate in the workforce."

"I still see discrepancies on salary between genders in the same position."

"The culture that the technology industry fosters is skewed towards toxic male culture, celebrating egotistical leaders like Musk and admiring female leaders that copy similar behaviour."



"There is always one guy in the room who will speak over me."

"I am often spoken over, spoken for, or my opinions are put down in meetings."

"Being a woman in a predominantly male environment means having to prove your abilities twice as much, facing additional challenges to be recognized and valued."

"Being a woman and being the only one among male peers, in a senior management position, allows me to bring women from my surroundings into this position. I have the opportunity to open more and more spaces for the next women who arrive."

"My male coworker has openly stated that he doesn't feel comfortable taking me out for a work dinner because I'm a woman. Rapports are strengthened by who can go to the pub and chat about football/sport."

- **More testimonies available in the full report.**

The 2024 Women in Tech report is part of Web Summit's commitment to fostering change, pushing for conversations that spotlight these issues and pave the way for concrete solutions. As women continue to navigate challenges in tech, Web Summit's mission is to drive a more inclusive and equitable future for all.

Women speaking at Web Summit 2024, in Lisbon include:

- Lidiane Jones, CEO of popular dating app Bumble;
- Peggy Johnson, CEO of Agility Robotics;
- Moly He, co-founder and CEO of Element Biosciences;
- Meredith Whittaker, president of encrypted messaging app Signal;
- Margarida Balseiro Lopes, Portugal's minister of youth and modernisation;
- Julie De Moyer, LVMH's recently appointed chief data and AI officer;
- Etosha Cave, co-founder and Chief Science Officer of Twelve;
- Eileen Burbidge, founding partner of Passion Capital;
- Daniela Braga, founder of Defined.AI;
- [And so much more.](#)

About Web Summit's Women in Tech:

Launched in 2015, [Web Summit's Women in Tech programme](#) aims to address gender inequality in the tech industry by offering women an 85 percent discount on general attendee tickets, along with priority access to exclusive Women in Tech events. By making tech conferences more accessible and encouraging greater participation, Web Summit strives to close the gender gap and foster a more diverse and innovative industry.

About Web Summit:

Web Summit is a technology events company, bringing together a global community of founders, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and investors to connect and exchange ideas about the technology and trends shaping the world. Web Summit events – including Web Summit in Lisbon, Web Summit Rio in South America, Web Summit Vancouver in North America, Web Summit Qatar in the Middle East, and RISE in Asia – have gathered nearly one million people since Web Summit's beginnings as a 150-person conference in Dublin in 2009. Its newest event, Web Summit Vancouver, will launch in May 2025.



About Web Summit 2024:

Web Summit will return in 2024 with more than 70,000 attendees, including 1,000-plus investors and an all-time record of 3,000 startups. The event will have a fresh focus on promoting meaningful connections and communities through meetups, powered by Summit Engine, Web Summit's proprietary software. "This will be our biggest, but also our smallest, event yet", explained Web Summit founder and CEO Paddy Cosgrave. Web Summit will invite attendees to at least one curated meetup based on their interest and backgrounds. Companies that will be partnering and speaking at this year's event include Meta, Alibaba.com, Amazon Web Services, Adobe, Visa, Wiz, KPMG, Zoom, LVMH, Salesforce, Qualcomm and more. Web Summit will also host The Ukraine Tech Ecosystem initiative, and welcome Ozempic creator and Europe's most valuable company, Novo Nordisk, to the event for the first time.

Previous editions of the report:

- 2023 - [Web Summit women in tech survey: Almost half of women feel their workplace is not combatting gender inequality](#)
- 2022 - [Web Summit survey finds half of women in tech have experienced sexism in the industry this year](#)
- 2019 - [Web Summit poll findings: Gender pay gap in tech is closing and the tech industry is becoming more gender balanced yearly](#)
- 2018 - [Web Summit women in tech poll: - "Men are judged based on potential, women are judged on proven capabilities"](#)

Useful links:

- [Web Summit website](#)
- [Web Summit Flickr](#)
- [Web Summit YouTube](#)