

PRESS RELEASE

First Asian woman to receive the Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion



Digital Entrepreneur and STEM evangelist, Lopa Patel MBE, has today (21st April 2015) been announced as one of the latest recipients of the Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion, becoming the first Asian woman to receive the award.

"It is a huge honour to receive the Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion," says Lopa Patel. "I am particularly proud to have become the first Asian woman to receive this award. Encouraging diversity and entrepreneurship in the world of business is something about which I am extremely passionate. It is my hope that this accolade will provide me with a platform to continue advocating diversity in business, as well as greater innovation of technological skills in industry".

The Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion was formed in 2004 and looks to recognise individual people who have played an important role in promoting enterprise skills and supporting entrepreneurs. Each year, up to 10 people become recipients of the award, individuals who have been recognised by their peers as those who have voluntarily passed on their skills and experience to future generations, and actively involved themselves in the education and development of the next generation of entrepreneurs.

As the first female Asian recipient of the award, today marks a key moment for the recognition of Asian women as entrepreneurs. Asian women have long had a strong presence in the running and creation of SMEs, but received little wider recognition for their contribution to entrepreneurship in the UK. The award comes after a long career spent as a passionate advocate for diversity and entrepreneurship in business and the creative industries, for which she received an MBE in 2009.

Lopa Patel also founded the equality and diversity think tank, Diversity UK, an organisation of which she currently sits as CEO. She is also a non-Executive Director of EMBG (Ethnic Minority Business Group) and a Trustee of educational charity Raha International. She is a Technology Ambassador for STEMNET, helping to encourage girls to take up science careers, a sector in which just 13% of the workforce are women (*'Women in scientific careers' Parliamentary Report, 2014*).

Lopa Patel's receipt of this award comes after a considerable career spent dedicated to the promotion of skills and enterprise throughout the UK and has enabled her to build a reputation as an inspirational figure in her field. She has promoted entrepreneurship, mentored new ventures and directed the activities of business networks and support programs.

She is also the first Asian woman to be elected as a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and is also a Fellow of the RSA, the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce.

Notes to editors:**About Lopa Patel MBE**

Lopa Patel is a digital entrepreneur with a lifelong love for science and technology, and a widely recognised evangelist for STEM, innovation and bridging the skills gap in business. She is the first Asian woman to be awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion. In 2009 she was presented with an MBE for services to the Creative Industries.

Lopa also founded the equality and diversity think tank, Diversity UK, an organisation of which she currently sits as CEO. She is also a non-Executive Director of EMBG (Ethnic Minority Business Group) and a Trustee of educational charity Raha International. She is also a Technology Ambassador for STEMNET, helping to encourage girls to take up science careers, a sector in which just 13% of the workforce are women ('Women in scientific careers' Parliamentary Report, 2014).

www.lopatel.com

About The Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion

Launched in 2004, The Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion (QAEP) recognises individuals who have encouraged others into enterprise by promoting enterprise skills and attitudes in other. Recipients could be working in business, education, training or youth work at either a national or local level. Each year up to 10 individuals are given the Award, with a further Lifetime Achievement Award being given should there be a suitable candidate.

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