
Two leading women icons recognised with Diversity Champion Awards

London [20th March 2024]: Two leading women icons were yesterday recognised by equality charity Diversity UK with Diversity Champion Awards for their outstanding endeavours in promoting gender equality. The charity, which this year is celebrating a decade of success of its Asians in Tech initiative, held an International Women's Day 2024 event at the House of Lords on Tuesday, 19 March 2024, honouring Conservative peer Baroness Verma and award-winning science journalist and author, Angela Saini.

The event marked this year's IWD theme of #InspireInclusion with a keynote by Saini followed by a panel debate on 'Investing in Women Tech Founders' with 3 of last year's Top 5 Investors and a pitch by two of the leading start-up founders showcased in its 'Top 100 Asian Stars in UK Tech 2023' list. Among the guests were previous Asians in Tech nominees, Asian Tech Pioneers and campaigners focussed on improving gender equality in the tech sector and ensuring that women entrepreneurs are adequately supported when raising funds to grow and scale their ventures.

"Baroness Verma epitomises all the excellent qualities of we seek to highlight with the Diversity Champion Award," said Lopa Patel MBE, Diversity UK Chair, "she has not only supported us with our seminal research on representation on Public Appointments; she has spoken at our events, she organised a steering group to further champion representation on boards and has been a staunch ally and mentor to me and my fellow Trustees.

She has a strong interest in diversity, gender issues and international affairs, particularly in the South Asian Region and Africa and chairs the UN Women's National Committee UK. During her illustrious political career she was Opposition Whip from 2006 to 2010 and then Government Whip following the 2010 general election. Prior to becoming Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for DECC, Baroness Verma was Spokesperson for the Cabinet Office, International Development, Women and Equalities and Business Innovation and Skills. I only wish that there were more women like her and it gives me great pleasure to present her with our Diversity Champion Award in recognition of her outstanding endeavours in promoting gender equality."

Presenting the award to Angela Saini, **Diversity UK Trustee, Francesca Jus-Burke**, said "I would like to say 'Thank you' to Angela Saini who has today shown us the power of evidence and social research to counter the arguments against diversity, equality, inclusion.

She has set us all a challenge today by asking what part we all play in keeping patriarchal structures alive. As a lawyer, she has given me much food for thought about what I can do to look beyond the old narratives to make a genuine and lasting difference. Diversity UK is all about looking beyond the past to what can happen in the future - for the next generation to be valued at an equitable level, to enjoy the freedom that our forefathers and foremothers did not - in a vibrant and healthy democracy. It is therefore an honour to present this award to Angela for championing gender, especially in science, throughout her career."

For a comprehensive overview, visit AsiansInTech.com. Join us in celebrating a decade of excellence! 🚀 #AsiansInTech #DiversityInTech #DiversityChampion

Notes for Editors:

Images:

About Diversity UK

Diversity UK is an equality and inclusion charity that researches, advocates and promotes ideas for improving diversity in Britain. Diversity UK delivers its charitable objectives by undertaking research, facilitating debates, hosting roundtable meetings, producing white papers and publishing a monthly newsletter focusing on contemporary equality issues. Diversity UK is a registered charity (No: 1155189) in England & Wales. <https://diversityuk.org/>

Diversity UK successes include:

- ❖ 1 Flagship ‘Beyond the Glass Ceiling’ Research Report published in 2013.
- ❖ 4 Reviews we participated in including the Davies ‘Women on Boards’ Review and the McGregor-Smith ‘Race in the Workplace’ Review
- ❖ 4 Consultations including on Gender Pay Gap Reporting, Diversity Action Plan & DEI initiatives
- ❖ 1 Women in Science Conference sponsored in 2016.
- ❖ 2 Collaborations with The Work Foundation and Fawcett Society on gender related research

About Asians in Tech

The Asians in Tech initiative was established in 2015 by Diversity UK with Lord Vaizey, then the Minister for the Digital Economy launching the first Top 100 Asian Stars in UK Tech list. Successes of the Asians in Tech initiative over the past decade include ★ 9 AT100 lists published; ★ 6 Tech Showcases hosted (Cambridge, London, Manchester); ★ 5 Chairman's Awards presented; ★ 121 Asian Tech Pioneers recognised; ★ 3 Investing in Women Founders panel debates held, ★ Queen's Award for Enterprise Masterclass delivered, ★ Asian Tech Pioneers video + ★ AI Inclusion Podcast.

Diversity UK is proud that the aim of showcasing Asian talent in the tech sector has been realised with founders achieving their investment targets, receiving grant funding, forming new partnerships and recognition in scaling their ventures. The Top 100 Asian Stars in UK Tech list and Asian Tech Pioneers Awards are celebrated in the summer of each year and published online at: <https://asiansintech.com/>

Social Media:

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/asiansintech/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/asiansintech/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/asiansintech/> @asiansintech

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/asiansintech/> @asiansintech

The Top 100 Asian Stars in UK Tech list and Diversity UK are the brainchild of the digital entrepreneur Lopa Patel MBE, listed in Computer Weekly’s Most Influential Women in UK Tech 2022 list, who has long been recognised as an evangelist for STEM and the tech industries in the UK.

Speaker Biographies:

Baroness Verma



Baroness Verma has a strong interest in diversity, gender issues and international affairs, particularly in the South Asian Region and Africa and chairs the UN Women's National Committee UK. She served as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the UK Department for International Development from May 2015 until July 2016. She is a Conservative member of the House of Lords. In 2006 she was raised to the peerage as Baroness Verma of Leicester in the County of Leicestershire. She was Opposition Whip from 2006 to 2010 and then Government Whip following the 2010 general election. Prior to becoming Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for DECC, Baroness

Verma was Spokesperson for Cabinet Office, International Development, Women and Equalities and Business Innovation and Skills.

Speaker Biographies:

About Angela Saini

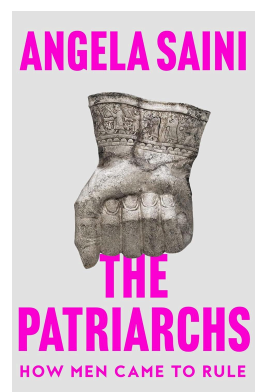


Angela Saini is an award-winning British science journalist and broadcaster. In her first book 'Geek Nation' she explored how Indian science is taking over the world. In her second, 'Inferior' published in 2017 she investigated how science got women wrong. Her third book 'Superior' explored the murky history of race science and the ways in which it is being resurrected in the 21st century.

In her fourth book '[The Patriarchs: How Men Came To Rule](#)' Angela goes in search of the true roots of gendered oppression, uncovering a complex history of how it first became embedded in societies

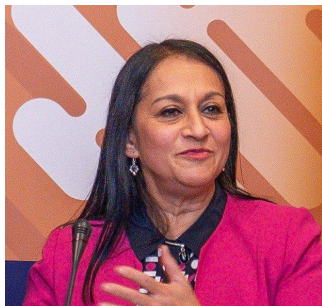
and spread across the globe from prehistory into the present. Travelling to the world's earliest known human settlements, analysing the latest research findings in science and archaeology, and tracing cultural and political histories from the Americas to Asia, she overturns simplistic universal theories to show that what patriarchy is and how far it goes back really depends on where you live.

Despite the push back against sexism and exploitation in our own time, even revolutionary efforts to bring about equality have often ended in failure and backlash. Saini ends by asking what part we all play – women included – in keeping patriarchal structures alive, and why we need to look beyond the old narratives to understand why it persists in the present.



Angela's work has appeared in National Geographic, New Scientist, Wired and The Sunday Times, and she regularly presents science programmes on the BBC. In 2020 she was named one of the world's top 50 thinkers by Prospect magazine, and in 2018 she was voted one of the most respected journalists in the UK. She has won honours from the Association of British Science Writers and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Angela has a Masters degree in Engineering from Oxford University and was a fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Lopa Patel MBE, Chair - Diversity UK



Lopa Patel is a digital entrepreneur with significant experience of creating start-ups and transforming businesses through technology. The founder of two ventures in online media and a data-driven marketing consultancy, she is also Chair equality charity, Diversity UK; Chair of the National Science & Media Museum (NSMM) Advisory Board; a Trustee of the Science Museum Group and a Non-Executive Director of the Intellectual Property Office (IPO).

With a lifelong love of science and technology, she is an evangelist for STEM, innovation and bridging the skills gap in business. She has been recognised with accolades including an MBE for services to the creative industries and the Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion. Lopa was named in Computer Weekly's 'Most Influential Women in Tech' 2022 list & won a Woman of Influence 2023 award.

Francesca Jus-Burke - Trustee



Francesca Jus-Burke is a corporate and commercial lawyer at Greenwoods Legal LLP in Cambridge. At her previous firm she founded a CSR Committee and sat on its D&I Steering Committee. Before becoming a lawyer, Francesca worked as a rowing coach for Putney High School and Barn Elms Boat Club, as a tutor & assessor for British Rowing, and as a sports performer coordinator and mentor for the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust. More recently, Francesca has been a trustee of Love Rowing (British Rowing's charitable foundation), a charity that changes lives by increasing diversity in the sport.

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