

# Speech: Margot James' speech at the Tech Talent Charter's one year anniversary event

It is a pleasure to be celebrating the achievements and impact of the Tech Talent Charter after one year on from its launch.

Seeing so many signatories to the TTC gathered here is an inspirational sight. It shows buy-in from all sectors to improve diversity of the tech workforce, something so essential for the continued success of our economy, and also the success for the sector.

It is impressive to see companies here who are competitors, working together to drive change and looking at the supporters of this event, TTC's sponsors, and those on its board, shows that companies can put collaboration on this crucial issue ahead of their otherwise conflicting commercial interests.

I know this event sold out in under 24 hours and TTC could probably have filled the room again with the number of companies who wanted to be here, from large multinationals to small start-ups.

This is important because, as report shows today, larger firms can learn from how smaller firms approach the challenges around diversity.

In the UK we have a thriving, and ever-growing, digital and tech sector. The sector is worth over £184 billion a year and is growing at more than two and half times the rate of the economy as a whole.

Technology is a crucial and growing part of modern life. Emerging technologies have an ever-greater impact on how we work, communicate, travel, and more importantly on how the new generations are growing up.

And the people creating this technology have the power to influence how it works. That's why, it is important that all of this new technology is being developed by a diverse workforce. We need diverse ideas and representation to break down disparities between gender, race and class amongst other defining characteristics.

That is the only way we'll ensure that tech is created for everyone and that we will all benefit from these transformations.

Only 19% of our workforce in tech roles are female and furthermore, only 11.7% of computer science A Level students are women. And still, there is a digital skills gap we need to fill, despite the fact that digital jobs pay almost a third more than non-digital jobs it is proving a difficult gap to fill.

Whilst we often consider diversity in terms of race and gender, there are, of course, defining characteristics; age, sexuality, marital status, parental

situation, mental health, and physical ability, to name some, against which we may unintentionally as well as intentional, discriminate.

At DCMS we want to support programmes working towards tackling the under-representation of all of these groups in our sectors.

It is encouraging to see the Tech Talent Charter has taken these other groups into account when mapping diversity work regionally – when we are addressing underrepresentation, everyone matters.

We've all seen the studies which prove that diverse workforces can improve a company's bottom line and the more diverse are more likely to outperform their competitors financially.

But we are not just interested in the business case for diversity – supporting a diverse and inclusive workforce is the right thing to do.

I am proud that my department has supported the Tech Talent Charter since its inception and continues to support its growth, particularly regionally growing outside London and the South East and integrating its diversity work with our Local Digital Skills Partnerships that we are now establishing across the country.

Three of these partnerships are already up and running in Lancashire, the South West and, most recently, in the West Midlands, with 3 more launching in the first half of this year.

So it is important that we all engage with our networks and our client-bases to encourage our connections to sign the Tech Talent Charter. It is only once more-and-more companies join us that we will start to see the cultural change that we all know needs to happen.

The fact that so many companies are keen to join is testament to the tireless work of Debbie, her team, her directors and the other activists and volunteers working behind the scenes of the Tech Talent Charter, I thank you all for your fantastic work.

All central government departments have now signed up to the Tech Talent Charter and I'm proud to say that DCMS was the first government department to sign. Again, the public, private, and voluntary sector collaboration on this issue is critical to achieve meaningful change.

Increasing sector diversity is critically important in the context of the changing nature of the tech sector. New innovations are increasingly blurring the lines between the tech sector and the rest of the economy. And the growing "Createch" sector, where technology enables new forms of creativity and creativity enables better development of technology.

The important impact of this is clear – addressing barriers to inclusion in the tech sector will also have increasing benefits across the wider economy. Equally, tech businesses can improve diversity by working more seamlessly with other sectors.

In line with this cross-pollination of ideas and collaboration, my department is working more closely than ever with our counterparts across government to ensure we join-up on initiatives that challenge and change the status quo.

We are able to bring our knowledge of the sector to bear on how industry might play a part in attracting those young people from under-represented groups to a career in tech.

We also want to understand and improve the pipeline to the tech world via STEM choices in schools. Industry needs a boosted pipeline to feed into their growing numbers of tech roles. This, and, indeed the responsibility for diversity in tech as a whole, does not fall just on the shoulders of industry.

In government we are analysing how behavioural insights might help us understand the career choices for young women, and women entering the workforce, in making decisions that's leading them away from STEM subjects in school and from tech careers.

It is important that we address and understand these issues and address them so we can work together to make the tech environment a place that benefits everyone.

Congratulations to all of you on the great year that you've had, the first year of Tech Talent Charter and the impact you've already made, and I look forward to congratulating Tech Talent Charter on reaching 300 signatories, a milestone I know is just around the corner.

There is a lot more hard work to come in getting this right, but, when we do, it really will enhance freedom and the opportunity throughout our society.

Women account for half the population and only 20 per cent of the most influential force of our time, technology and innovation and that cannot go unchallenged.

And I wish you the very best with your future endeavours and I pledge my support for the continuity of the Tech Talent Charter until the job is done.

Thank you for listening.

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## **News story: UKAEA appoints new Chief Financial Officer**

Antonia Jenkinson trained at Accenture before starting her career in corporate finance at Apax Partners where she advised companies and management teams on their equity & debt fundraisings, acquisitions and divestments.

Antonia went 'in-house' in 2008 as Chief Financial Officer at the Wyevale retail group with £270m of sales across 130 sites and 5,000 employees. Antonia moved back into the technology sector when she joined the Satellite Applications Catapult and helped grow the business from a start-up to the established space innovation business it is today.

Over the last year, Antonia has been CFO of Roc Technologies Ltd, one of the UK's fastest growing IT transformation services providers, serving both the public and private sectors, particularly in defence and secure industries. She recently completed the acquisition of Esteem Systems Ltd, bringing the group to total revenues of £80m and 350 employees.

Alongside her executive roles, Antonia has been a Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Audit Committees of Garden Centre Property Development Trading plc, Ocean Safety Ltd and currently Vysion Limited. She won the Sunday Times NED Award for a private equity backed business in 2015. Antonia is a fellow of the Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment.

Commenting on her appointment, Antonia said:

It is exciting to be joining the impressive UKAEA team at this important time in their mission to provide a source of sustainable energy. I am looking forward to finding ways to commercialise the leading-edge technologies involved, including robotics and new materials.

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## **Press release: New site to help schools save thousands on recruitment costs**

Schools will save thousands of pounds in recruitment costs as the Government launches a new online tool to help them avoid agencies that charge excessive fees.

The Education Secretary Damian Hinds today (15 January) announces an [online tool](#) which will clearly show the fees recruitment agencies charge on top of staff wages, so school leaders know what they are getting for their money. It will also help schools avoid agencies that charge fees for making temporary staff permanent.

In 2016/17, the last year for which figures are available, schools in England spent £825 million with supply agencies.

To appear on the list of approved agencies available through the tool, they must set out their costs up-front – allowing schools to compare prices – and conduct rigorous background checks on their staff.

Schools across the country are already benefiting from the Government's clampdown on expensive fees after plans were initially set out last year. Rainhill High School, an academy in St Helens, Merseyside, reported savings of £2,500 in three months – thanks in part to using the tool to find a new supply agency that offered the best value. The Education Secretary is now calling on more schools to follow their lead by using the new online tool when recruiting supply teachers and agency workers.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

I want to help schools use their resources as effectively as possible. There will always be a role for supply teachers within schools, but schools shouldn't be ripped off when trying to recruit them. This new online tool will bring much-needed transparency to the fees that agencies charge to enable school leaders to see what they are getting for their money.

This is the latest step in our effort to help schools bear down some of the costs they face, building on the School Resource Management Strategy I launched last year to provide practical advice and support to school leaders so that they can focus on what they do so well – delivering high-quality education for their pupils.

There can be no great schools without great teachers to inspire and motivate children, so it's absolutely right that we help schools to maximise the money they have to spend in the classroom by working together, making sure they're getting the best deals and are not being overcharged for services.

Lord Agnew, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the School System, is writing to all schools in England to let them know about the online tool, which has been developed with Crown Commercial Service.

Today's launch follows the Education Secretary's pledge at the National Association of Head Teachers' annual conference in May to work with schools and drive down unnecessary cost pressures so headteachers can get maximum value for every pound they spend and bring in the best staff.

It also follows a series of steps taken by the department to help schools deliver value for money and ensure resources can be targeted at the frontline.

This includes:

- A free website to advertise school vacancies – this will help schools save on advertising for positions, which currently costs them up to £75

million per year;

- Recommended deals that are helping schools to save money on the things they buy regularly, such as printers and photocopiers – one school in the North West has saved an estimated £40,000 on its printing costs;
- Regional Schools Buying Hubs, piloted in the North West and South West, providing hands-on support and advice to schools on complex procurement. One school saved £75,000 across a three-year cleaning contract, while 82 schools in the South West have saved an estimated £137,000 on water;
- A network of advisers providing practical support on how schools can use their budgets more effectively. During the pilot phase of 72 deployments, advisers identified £35 million of potential savings for schools;
- A [benchmarking website](#) to allow schools to compare their income and expenditure with others in England.

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## News story: Policing Minister chairs new taskforce to tackle vehicle theft



The Policing Minister, Nick Hurd, has today (15 January) chaired a new taskforce to tackle vehicle theft.

The taskforce replicates the successful model used to reduce moped-related crime in London, which fell by a third in the period from January to October 2018 compared with the same period in 2017 last year. It will drive forward action to reduce and prevent vehicle crime and promote best practice.

The taskforce will meet every six months and publish an action plan with new measures. Vehicle theft has risen by 7% in the last 12 months and has impacted communities across the country.

Chairing the meeting, Policing Minister Nick Hurd said:

We are determined to take swift and decisive action on emerging crime threats. With rates of vehicle theft increasing, I am keen to ensure everything is being done to prevent these crimes.

Drawing together the police, industry and government proved to be a successful way to see what more could be done to support police efforts to tackle moped crime and I'm eager to see the results of applying a similar model to vehicle theft.

The determination and common purpose at this morning's meeting was encouraging and I'm confident the taskforce will significantly strengthen our response to vehicle theft.

The taskforce's work includes:

- improving vehicle security standards across the industry
- ensuring robust measures are in place to prevent criminals exploiting the motor salvage process
- reviewing whether further measures are required to stop devices that may be used to commit vehicle theft falling into criminals' hands

Attendees for today's event included representatives from:

- National Police Chiefs' Council Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Limited
- Thatcham Research
- Retail Motor Industry
- Motorcycle Retail Industry Association
- Association of British Insurers
- Combined Industries Theft Solution
- Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
- West Midlands PCC
- West Midlands Police

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## [Press release: First tower crane arrives as HS2 prepares to demolish Euston towers](#)

Delivered last week and assembled over 4 days, the 66 metre high crane will be the first of 3 in the Euston area and comes a week after the completion of the station's new taxi rank, which opened to the public on Sunday 6th January.

Together, this progress allows HS2 to push ahead with the demolition of One Euston Square and Grant Thornton House, which stand above the entrance and exit to Euston's old underground taxi rank.

Expected to take around 10 months to complete, their removal will be the biggest change to the Euston skyline for almost 50 years. HS2's early works contractor, a Costain and Skanska joint venture (CSjv), working with expert subcontractors McGee, are already hard at work, stripping out the interiors and erecting the scaffolding that will support acoustic screening around the buildings.

The screening, designed to limit noise and dust, will cover the 2 1970s towers, with 93% of the material from the building set to be recycled or reused. The deconstruction itself will happen floor by floor, with waste material removed via the building's lift shafts.

HS2 Ltd's London Programme Director, Rob Carr, said:

HS2 will transform Euston, delivering much-needed extra capacity and better journeys for the 44 million people who use the station every year. We are already hard at work, delivering essential pre-construction work, including archaeology, utility diversions and of course, the demolition of the 2 Euston towers.

The opening of the new taxi rank and the delivery of the project's first tower crane is a significant milestone for HS2 and I would like to thank everyone involved in making it happen.

CSjv's Programme Director, Peter Jones, said:

Costain and Skanska have successfully delivered many major infrastructure projects and are pleased to be delivering the HS2 enabling works programme in London. Our work continues to gather pace and constructing this temporary taxi rank to replace the underground taxi rank is vital to allow us to demolish the 2 large office towers at Euston.

Over the last 8 months, HS2 has also been working with TfL and Network Rail to deliver a new taxi rank in front of the station.

The new rank, which has capacity for around 40 vehicles, has been designed to incorporate as many of the existing trees as possible, with special measures including permeable pavement and root protection in place.

The taxi rank will be in use while HS2 construction work at Euston is ongoing. Taxis will ultimately move to a new location once construction is complete.

HS2 will more than double the number of seats out of Euston during peak hours and free up space on the west coast mainline for more local and long distance commuter services to places like Watford, Northampton and Milton Keynes.