Why Representation in Technology is Important

Jenny Fallover

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Who am I and what has been my journey in technology?

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Who Am I? Blue are not choices and white are my choices

Gamer

Identify as a Cis-Woman

Sci-fi Nerd

Gender Non-Conforming Lesbian

White

Vegetarian

Global co-chair Refinitiv Prism

Dyspraxic (live up to my name!)

Golfer

Over 40

Possibly peri-menopausal!
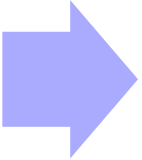
Writer

Overweight

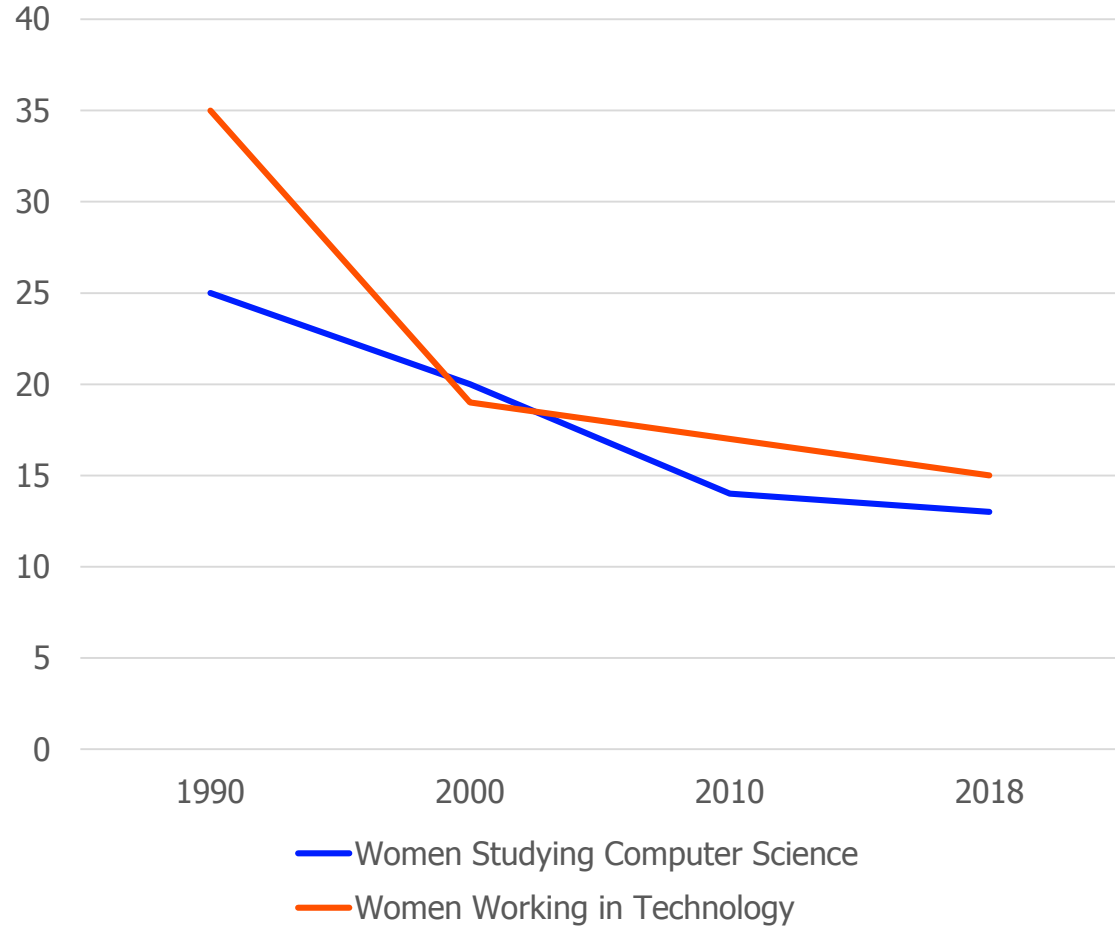Guitarist

Cockney/Essex Accent

Why Representation in Technology is Important

My accidental journey into tech and why I didn't think of it before

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What has changed? – the good and bad

Percentage of Women Studied Tech and Working in Tech from 1990 until 2018


```
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
 5
 0
     1990        2000        2010        2018
```

— Women Studying Computer Science
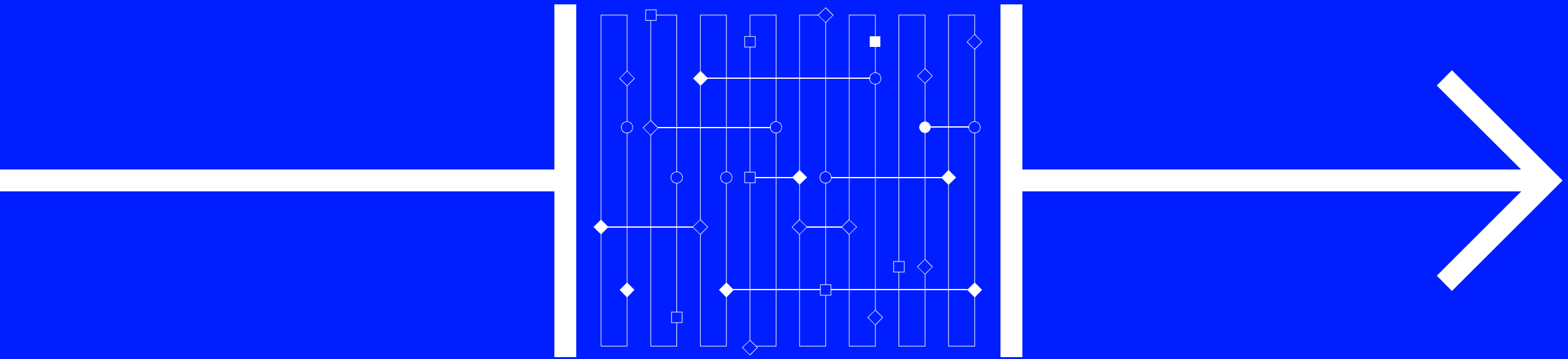— Women Working in Technology

The bad

- General stats over time show that the percentage of women studying computer sciences and technology is at an all time low, as is the number of women working in technology whereas the number leaving technology is rising.

- Reasons for not pursuing a career in technology include:

Sexism, perceived lack of opportunities to be promoted, gender pay gap, condition and gender stereotyping, culture

The good

- Companies are aware of the issue and want to deal with it
- There are many initiatives out there to encourage young girls and women to pursue a career in technology
- Culture in a lot of organisations has progressed

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What can we do to promote a more diverse workforce in technology?

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What are the challenges in forming a diverse workforce in technology?

Education/Diverse Pipeline

- There is still conditioning and gender stereotyping in the education from a young age
- STEM subjects not promoted in the right way to girls
- Male dominated fields can feel intimidating
- Female role models in technology not communicated
- Poor careers advice – technology is such wide field there are lots of exciting opportunities if you don't want to be a coder

Recruitment

- Far less girls seem to find their way into apprenticeships for STEM subjects (5-10%)
- Women will not apply for roles that appear to be aimed at men in the job description
- Company web site doesn't have a diversity section or diversity friendly images
- Unconscious bias from hirers
- Recruiters not having a diversity mindset and understanding why its beneficial to have a diverse workforce
- Not enough tech graduate programmes targeted at diverse graduates

Retain and develop

- Work/life balance and support for that
- Ageism
- Sexism
- The glass ceiling or in the case of lesbians the double glazed glass ceiling!
- No clear career path
- Limited opportunities for progression
- Pay gap
- Redundancy
- Poorly trained management

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The diverse pipeline and how to harness it –Capturing their imagination and hands on events

- These are just a few examples of great organisations that give young people the ability to get hands on experience in technology and stem.

- When involved in Apps for Good projects I have seen a clear 50/50 gender split in participants and many have continued to be involved in technology afterwards

- Girl only coding events have also been extremely popular

- These organisations are country wide and cross the socio-economic barrier

- Teach them about role models in tech they may never have heard of!

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Recruitment, onboarding and retain and develop

Accountability – what can leaders to effect positive change in this area?

Recruitment

- Create gender neutral job descriptions

- Advertise the jobs on diversity friendly job boards

- Insist that recruiters work harder to provide a diverse candidate slate

- Be clear about your diversity policies and initiatives in interviews with candidates

- Be ethical – try and resist the 'boys network' way of recruiting

- Don't make degrees mandatory, test on aptitude

- Make sure you are also looking at socio-economic backgrounds and not narrowing the pool with just Oxbridge candidates

- Employ tools or techniques for blind auditions to avoid unconscious biases

Onboarding

- Be clear about all of your positive policies and benefits in the interview

- Create fields in people systems for employees to self identify

- Tell them about your employee network groups

- Make sure that any employee assistance programmes are communicated

- Tell the candidate about the great partnerships the company has and how they can get involved.
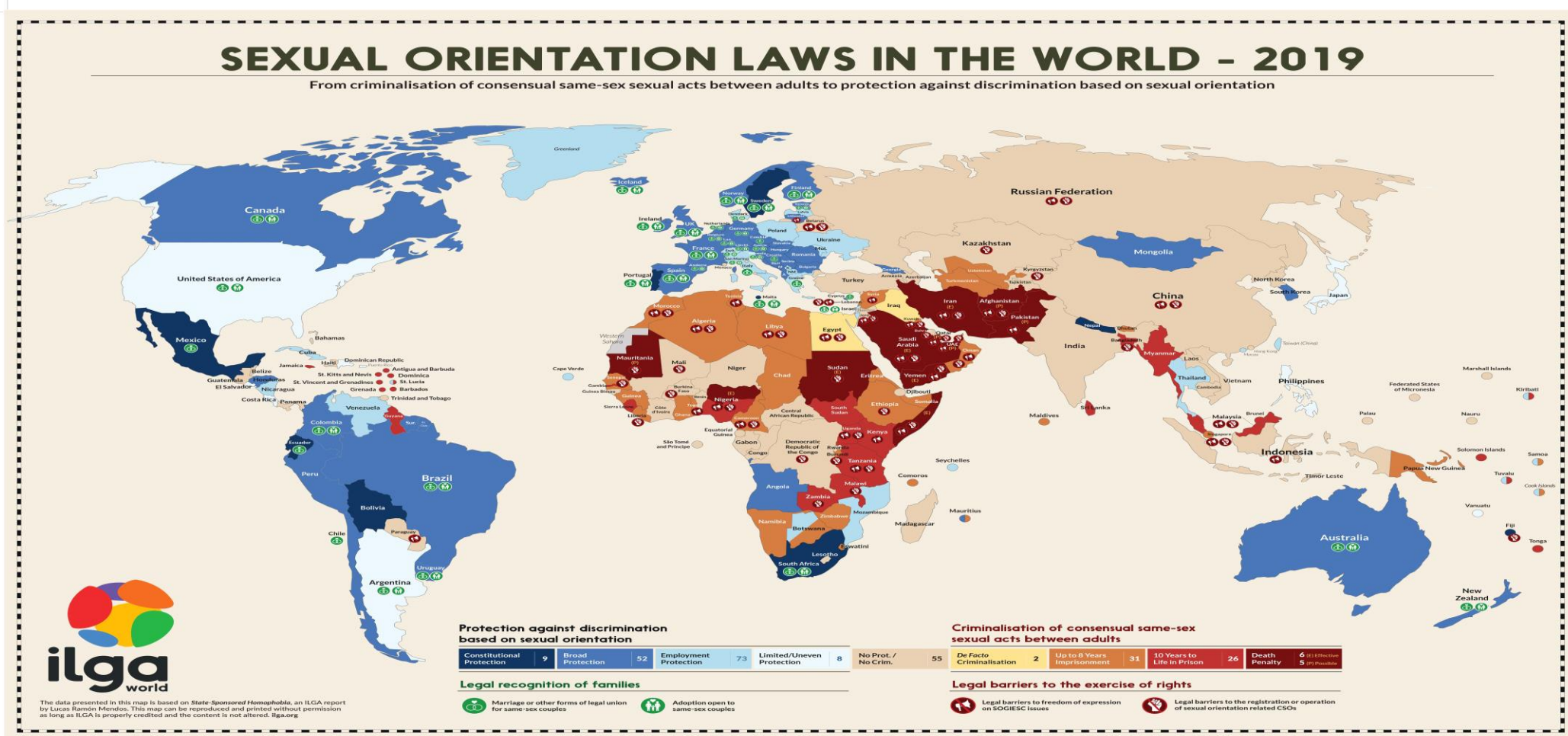

Retain and develop

- Managers have detailed diversity training so that they can be sensitive to employees needs

- Leadership training available to all but minorities and women actively encouraged to participate

- Support employees throughout their careers not just at the beginning – have a careers network not just an early careers network

- Don't be scared of embracing flexible and remote working

- Use the Stonewall Equality Index to benchmark your company so that you can make improvements

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Global Picture – LGBT people and the ILGA map – Some shocking statistics and some more positive ones on country and state law

Legal Status	Number of Countries
Death penalty still active	6
Death penalty in law but not actively used	5
Penalty for being LGB is 10 years or more in prison	26
Penalty for being LGB is 8 years in prison	31
Do not criminalise but do discriminate	55
A mental health diagnosis is required in order to obtain legal gender recognition	36
Where sterilisation is required as part of gender recognition	16
Divorce is required as part of gender recognition	22
EU states that do not off protections to trans* people	12
Employment protection (doesn't include USA where you can be fired for being LGBT in 26 states	74
Offer some protections	52
Have protections as part of their constitution	9

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Global Picture – LGB people and the ILGA map and how to safe guard your LGBT+ workforce in a global environment

- Understand the legal status of countries you are doing business with or have locations at
- Understand the social and political climate in any countries you have locations at and any you might send an employee to
- Don't penalise an employee if they seem less than keen to relocate or travel to a particular destination
- Ask the employee if there would be any impact at all to home life if they located
- Use your money and influence to change things – Brunei and the death penalty is a good example of how we can quickly effect positive change
- Publish information to employees on the risks of living and working in different countries so that they can be informed and make their own minds up

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Thank you

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