

Jisc

# Gender pay gap report 2025

May 2026



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# Introduction



I'm proud of the continued focus we have placed on reducing our gender pay gaps, although this year's results show a, small, but disappointing increase.

After three consecutive years of improvement, both our median and mean pay gaps have risen slightly in 2025. I acknowledge there is still much more to do.

Our median pay gap has increased from 15% to 15.5%, and our mean pay gap has risen from 12.4% to 13.2%. These movements reflect the ongoing imbalance in our upper and upper-middle pay quartiles. While our most senior roles remain gender balanced, slower recruitment this year has limited opportunities to further increase representation of women at upper-middle levels.

Our median bonus gap remains at 0%, supported by a company-wide performance award. The mean bonus gap has, however, increased from 11.1% to 14.3%. We will continue to ensure that any future commission scheme reviews take full account of gender pay implications, and that our roles which pay commission are attractive to women.

We remain deeply committed to retaining and progressing the talented women already within Jisc, as well as providing equitable opportunities for those wishing to join us. Over the past year, we have strengthened support for hiring managers and reviewed key recruitment processes to promote fairness and long-term equity. Colleague feedback

“ We remain deeply committed to retaining and progressing the talented women already within Jisc...”

continues to highlight the importance of hybrid-working and flexibility, even more so when balancing work with caring and/or parental roles.

We are focussing on menopause awareness across Jisc and considering how this time in a woman's life should be supported by the business, with the aim of retaining women who have invested years into building their careers. Ensuring the appropriate awareness is in place so they are supported is becoming a major piece of work for the whole of Jisc.

Our employee networks continue to support women of all identities, listening to them whilst building individual and collective strength coupled with a strong sense of community. We have found this has resulted in members having greater confidence and self-belief to aim for their career goals. Over the next year we will focus more on capacity and confidence building for women in mid-to senior-level technical roles, as the data shows this is where more work is needed.

We continue with our mission of eradicating the gender pay gap. You can read about what we are committed to undertaking over the next year in our report.

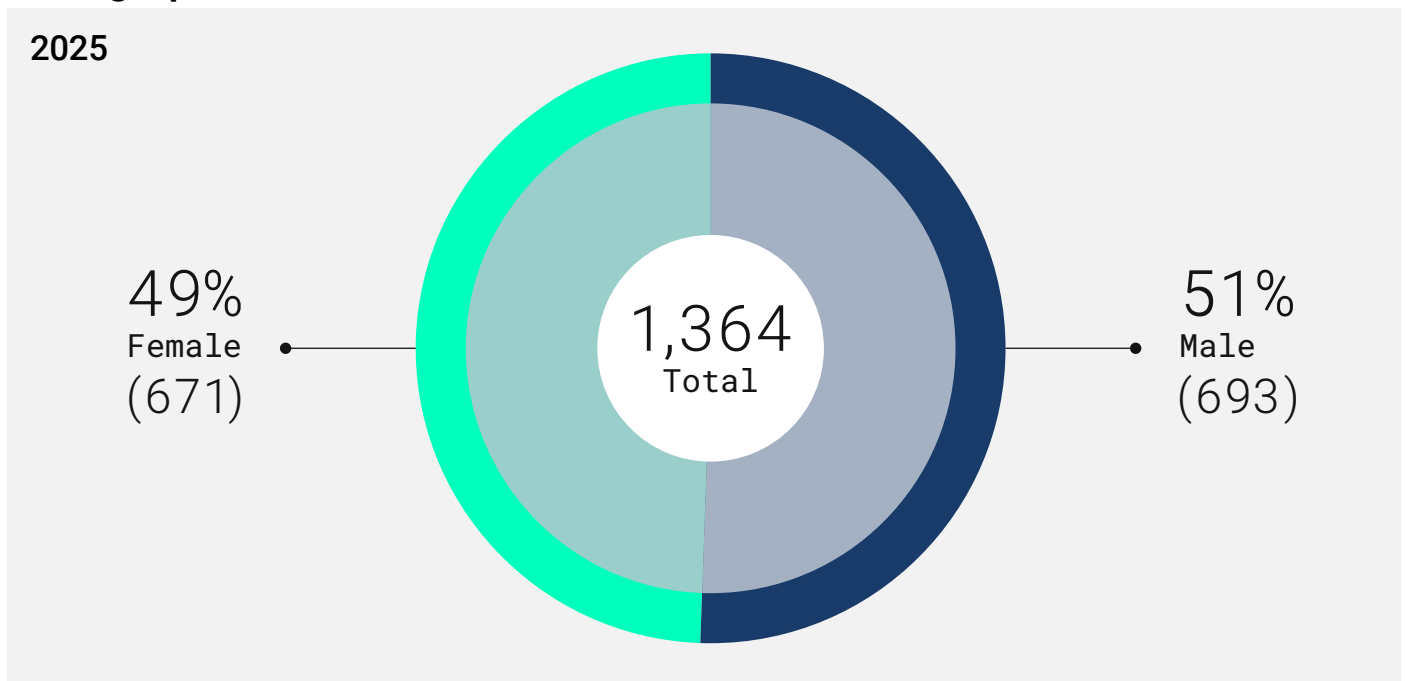
**Heidi Fraser-Krauss,**  
Chief executive, Jisc

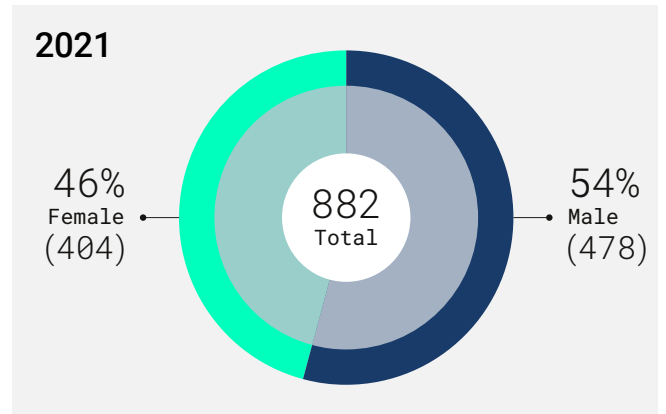
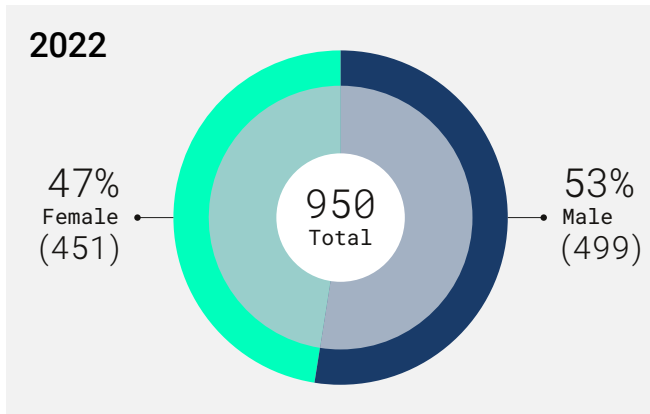
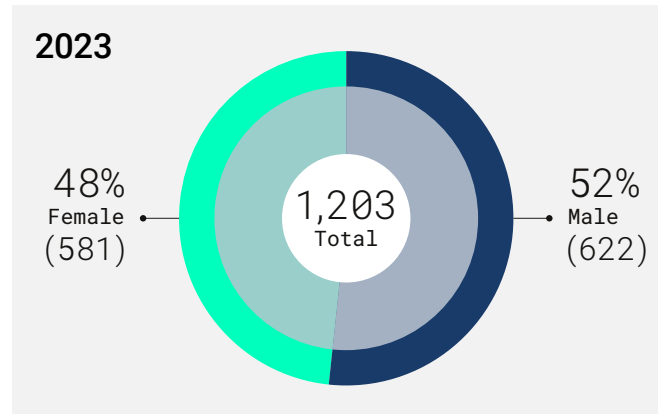
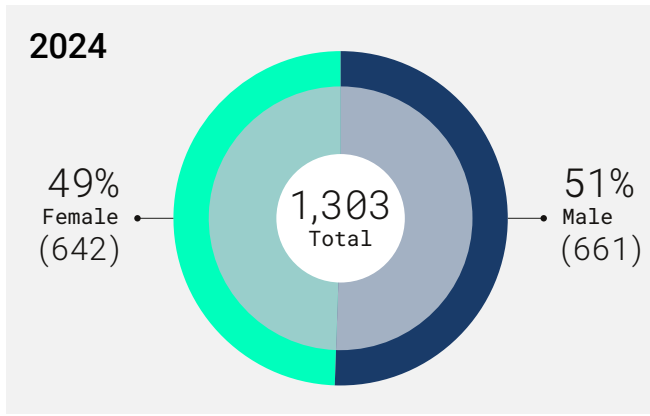
# Our gender pay gap data

The tables below outline all the reportable data since reporting began and include the data for this year.

The latest figures shown were taken on 5th April 2025.

## Demographics

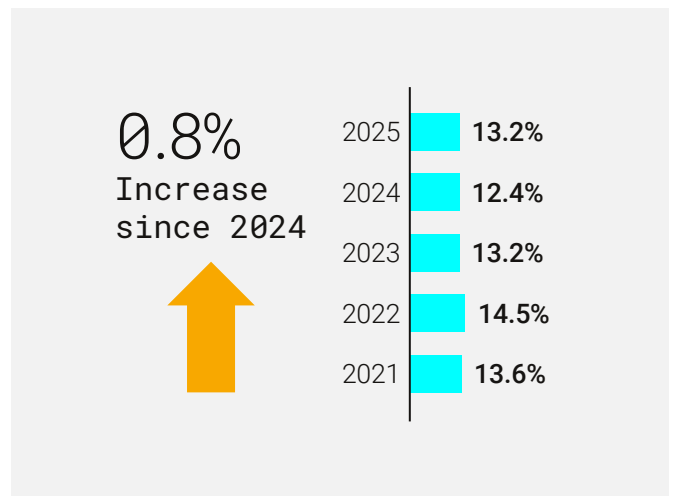




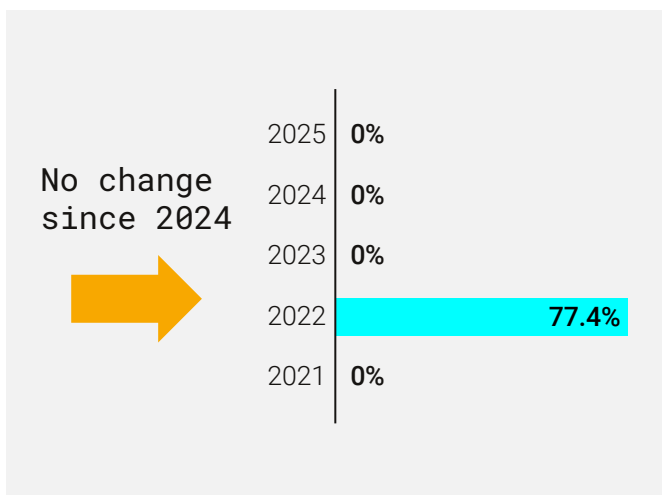
## Gender pay gap: median



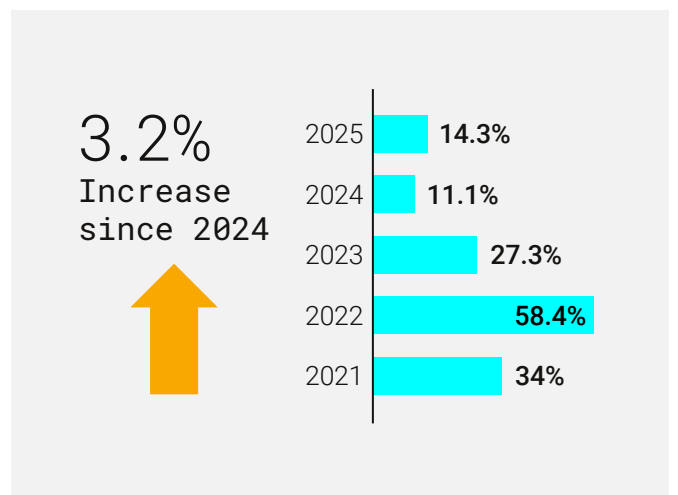
## Gender pay gap: mean



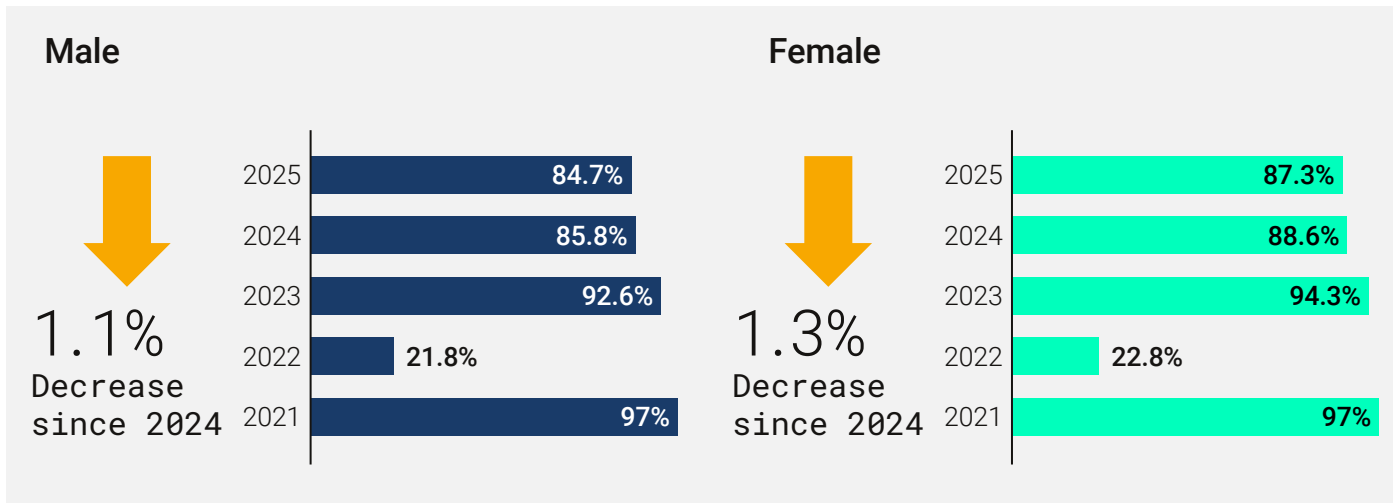
## Bonus pay gap: median



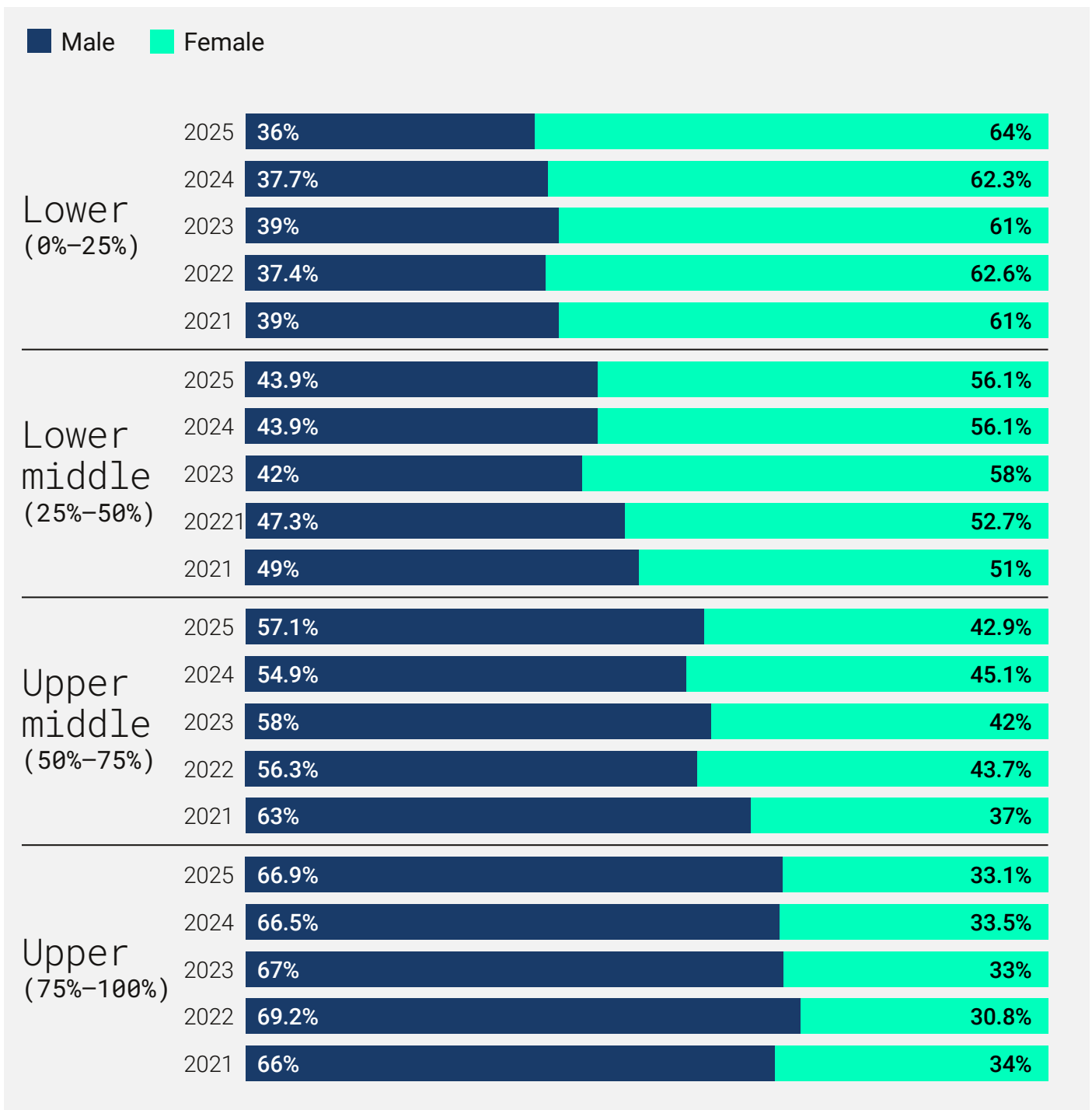
## Bonus pay gap: mean



# Proportion of staff receiving bonus



## Quartiles



# What's driving our pay gap?

Our median gender pay gap has increased from 15% in 2024 to

# 15.5%

in 2025.

A gender pay gap is a measure of the difference in the average pay of men and women across an entire organisation, regardless of the nature or level of their work. It highlights the different number of men and women across all roles.



It is different from an equal pay comparison, which involves a direct comparison of two people or groups of people carrying out the same work or work of equal value.

Our median gender pay gap has increased from 15% in 2024 to 15.5% in 2025. The mean gender pay gap has increased from 12.4% in 2024 to 13.2% in 2025.

This year, the consecutive years of reduction in both the median and mean have ended.

The primary reason for this is due to continued gender imbalance within the upper and upper-middle posts. Whilst we are gender balanced in our most senior posts; we have not yet achieved that same level of parity in posts in these quartiles. One reason for this is that recruitment has significantly slowed down this year giving us less of an opportunity to bring new, female talent into the business.

The median bonus pay gap remains at 0%, reflecting the organisation-wide performance award applied equally to all eligible employees. However, the mean bonus pay gap has increased from 11.1% in 2024 to 14.3%. This rise is primarily attributable to a small number of senior male colleagues within the commission scheme who received higher bonus payments linked to the successful delivery of large-scale commercial contracts. Reviews of the commission scheme will continue to incorporate assessment of gender pay gap impacts to ensure any reinforcement of disparities is identified, understood, and mitigated in alignment with wider business strategy.

# What action are we taking?

Jisc has strengthened its approach to inclusive recruitment following a comprehensive review last year. We've developed clearer support and training for hiring managers and examined key elements of our recruitment process.

This includes; exploring the use of blind CVs, advertising practices, and diverse interview panels and increased awareness of bias through collaboration with our employee networks. Alongside this, we remain committed to our *grow our own* strategy, particularly through our Early Careers programme, which is successfully attracting a near 50/50 gender balance into technical areas that have historically lacked female representation. While this long-term approach means change takes time, it ensures we are developing a strong and diverse talent pipeline for the future.

We are also focused on retaining and progressing the women already within Jisc. Feedback has emphasised the value of flexibility, menopause awareness, and confidence-building, especially for women in mid to senior technical roles. In response, we are exploring more part-time and job-share opportunities at higher levels, reviewing workplace adjustments guidance, and supporting managers to make confident decisions around flexible working. Our employee networks: women's, menopause, parents & carers, faith, internationals and others continue to grow and provide vital spaces for discussion, peer support, events, and resources that promote inclusion and empower colleagues.

To further support women throughout different stages of life and career, we've taken part in the [Growth Spurt pilot programme](#) for expectant and returning parents and are onboarding a menopause partner to help us meet upcoming legislative expectations and our own ambitions to keep women thriving at the peak of their careers. This, alongside our new partnership with the Business Disability Forum, reinforces our commitment to building an inclusive, supportive culture that enables all colleagues to succeed.

## For 2026 we are committing to:

1. Increase awareness of part-time and job share opportunities with hiring managers, including cultural work on understanding real vs perceived barriers around this at Jisc.
2. Establishing a strategic menopause partnership to support our ambitions in continuing with raising awareness and education on menopause within the workplace for managers and leaders. Keeping women in the workplace during this phase of life is an important step in retaining women at a particular point in their career with significant skillsets and experience.



- 3.** Complete the changes with respect to the diversity data ask from colleagues to include socio-economic status and parent and/or carer status. This ensures we can understand colleagues with an intersectional lens.
- 4.** Focus the training budget on building critical skills required for colleagues to develop, especially within key business areas such as cyber, cloud, and IT. Ensuring women are aware of this, and have equal access, will be considered with relevant internal communications.

- 5.** Continue to build upon the employee networks excellent work to offer and fund sessions that support women advocating better for themselves in the workplace. Work with our networks to better understand the differing experiences and generations in the workplace and take appropriate action.

# Our stories

## Celebrating the voices of women across Jisc

Discover the experiences inspirational women at Jisc who are shaping our organisation in diverse roles and through our networks such as the faith network, internationals network, and more. These stories highlight their careers, communities, confidence and lived experiences that enrich our culture, showcasing the women who lead, support, innovate, and inspire every day.

### Sandra Idehen, QA analyst

#### Career

Growing up in a Nigerian household, Sandra wanted to be a lawyer or doctor but was also fascinated by hands-on roles like plumbing or being an electrician. Her switch to tech came from curiosity, after watching a tv show investigating online predators. The idea of using technology to solve real life problems intrigued her. Furthermore, it gave her a sense of purpose, noting deeper interest in understanding how computers, the internet, and binary systems (“ones and zeros”) work. This laid a foundation for her work in quality assurance (QA) and software development.

Currently, Sandra mentions being in a continuous loop of learning. With new fast paced developments with AI, her role evolves rapidly, she explains “You can never know everything with tech because its only new to a certain point”. Her day-to-day work at Jisc includes daily meetings for multiple teams, sprint and scope sessions for tickets, identifying and reporting bugs and accessibility testing. She says “my job is to break the system. If I can break it, we fix it. If I can't, it works.” It was this mentality that helped her identifying a broken focus state in Jisc’s global navigation, which would’ve affected accessibility for users who rely on keyboard navigation.

#### Community and connection

Sandra is also a member of two employee networks at Jisc, the Internationals at Jisc and the Christian branch of the Faith and ethical beliefs network, the latter she also volunteers as a co-chair. The employee networks have a special meaning to her, where she appreciates the community of people within them. The Internationals at Jisc employee network has helped her overcome the isolation of remote work, engaging in cultural exchanges, social connections and meeting people outside of her immediate team. Additionally, she appreciates the ability to integrate her Christian faith into her professional life, describing it as a “beautiful” experience, gaining emotional and spiritual support from colleagues at work. At times, where Sandra feels imposter syndrome or self-doubt, her faith plays a major part in keeping her grounded and optimistic. When challenges arise, she focuses on things “one small step at a time”, converting her self-doubt into confidence.



## Confidence

Sandra credits much of her growth to her manager, who she considers a mentor to her. Within the relationship, there is space for her to grow, encouragement for her ambitions, and guidance for her career development, allowing her to flourish. He and others recommended the RISE leadership development program for Sandra, and she describes this as one of the best things she's done for herself. It boosted her leadership abilities, strategic thinking and confidence. There was empowerment in being with people who shared a similar background and provided extra visibility of representation.

At Jisc, Sandra is further inspired by Heidi Fraser-Krauss, Jisc's chief executive officer. She explained how their first encounter was over a cup of tea in the kitchen, detailing how approachable and warm she was, as she authentically engaged with staff.

She expressed that Heidi models inclusive and people-centred leadership. Sandra aspires to lead with the same openness and humanity.

## Gender pay gap

Sandra thoughts on the gender pay gap is that it requires fair and equitable recruitment practices and transparency. She commends the annual reporting that takes place and mentions this should lead to proactive action, taking the presentation of data further. Initiatives like RISE are investments into career development for under-represented groups and evidence Jisc's commitment to closing gaps and supporting equity.

# Benazir Ulde, security operations analyst tier II

## Career

Growing up, Benazir did not have a specific childhood dream job. However, she was certain she did not want to follow the traditional path of other women in her family, who, after leaving education, joined the family business. Instead, she forged independence, creating her own place in the corporate world. Her inspiration for cybersecurity stemmed from the major 'WannaCry' cyber incident, which affected the NHS in 2017. She chose to restart her career at a more junior level, following relocating from India to the United Kingdom, but relished at the opportunity to do more and gain further expertise.

Benazir now works as a security operations analyst (tier II) and describes her day-to-day work as being "internal police". Working in Internal security, her work focus' on monitoring, checking behavioural anomalies and protecting Jisc staff members from phishing attacks. Furthermore, she is a co-chair of the Women at Jisc employee network. At Jisc, Benazir is motivated by the strong communication framework at Jisc. This extends to her team, employee networks, the Executive Leadership Team, and the fact there is so much information available on the intranet allowing her to be informed, supported and motivated.

## Community and connection

During her career, Benazir has experienced barriers relating to her identity, ethnicity and confidence. A moment of realisation for Benazir was she was not alone in her experiences, and that community and connection were key to boosting confidence. Prior to becoming a co-chair, the Women at Jisc employee network allowed her to overcome isolation in a male dominated industry, being able to "watch and learn" from others, connect to a community of women over time, giving her confidence and resonating more with women's stories.

Prior to joining Jisc, Benazir had never had a mentor. Growing up, the narrative had been that "mentorship was indicative of not being enough". However, she now believes this is not the case, noting the values of learning from others. Benazir views Jisc's open communication culture as a form of ongoing mentorship, as it provides leadership visibility. Introspection has allowed her to think of how she wanted to be mentored and what she needed. Through the women at Jisc network, she has learnt a lot about action learning sets and how this has opened a new learning space for her.

## Confidence

Benazir set herself the goal of applying for the Rising Star in Tech Award within two years. Still feeling doubt and of not being ready, by the third year she decided to apply anyway, specifically to fight the feelings of self-doubt. The process empowered her and she was shortlisted and won!

She knew winning an award was not needed to validate her growth, but to validate that she can empower self-acceptance from within; a powerful antidote to the feeling of "I am not enough" that many women carry. Winning the award reaffirmed that it is not just the impact you have already created, but also what impact you are willing to create and how you see yourself is what matters too.

Following winning, she expressed gratitude toward Jisc colleagues, who supported her and celebrated her. For Benazir, this meant more to her than winning the award itself, especially as it brought her closer to the Jisc community.

## Gender pay gap

Benazir acknowledged that within cyber, women tend to be in the lower pay quartiles and highlighted the structural barriers that are faced. She believes we need to continue building women's confidence and empowering through networks and mentorship, believing this can help close gaps. Her advice is to "just do it! Don't wait until you think you are ready".





## **Bella Abrams, group chief technology officer**

### **What did you want to be when you grew up?**

When I was little, I assumed I wanted to be a teacher just like my parents. I loved history and obsessed with learning. I studied history at the University of Sheffield but before committing to a PGCE, I worked as a language assistant on an island in the Indian Ocean. I spent a year teaching six-year-old French children English and introducing them to the European Union. It was an extraordinary experience and confirmed that I was not the best teacher on the island. When I came home and found my first job in ed tech I was relieved that I could still work in education and ensure that everything I did still harnessed the power of education to change people's lives, I'd also learned the importance of communication, and the ability to adapt quickly – all of which have shaped why I work in technology today and why I work for Jisc.

### **What stage are you now in your career?**

I'm at a stage where my 25 years of experience allow me to lead with confidence, clarity, and purpose, while remaining curious and motivated to keep learning. As the most senior woman in technology at Jisc – and one of many senior women in the organisation – I'm aware of the responsibility that comes with the role. I'm focused on building a team that reflects that responsibility: shaping the culture, systems, and pathways that will develop future leaders and strengthen Jisc for the long term.

### **Tell me more about what leadership entails...**

Leadership in technology is about translating possibility into meaningful impact. It requires navigating constant change, balancing new things with responsibility, and ensuring technology is accessible, ethical, and aligned with people's

needs. It is rarely about the technology itself but rather what can be enabled with it. It's also deeply people focussed work. Tech leadership means working together to create clarity in complexity, empowering teams to improve and grow, and building environments where diverse perspectives — especially those underrepresented in tech — are valued. At its heart, it's about pairing vision with listening, empathy, and delivery.

### **What barriers have you had to overcome in your career and how did you approach that?**

Like many women in technology, I was often the only woman or the first woman in a particular role. Earlier in my career, I was often the youngest person in leadership, which brought both visibility and pressure — managing assumptions, demonstrating expertise, and feeling confident in environments not designed with you in mind. There were also structural barriers — limited access to certain networks, fewer senior role models, and challenges progressing in environments where women's leadership wasn't recognised equally. I'm always focused on curiosity, friendship, mentoring, and a reputation for getting things done. I've built my credibility through delivery and advocating for others.

### **Mentors — have you ever had a mentor and if so, how impactful did you find it?**

Yes, I've had mentors at various points in my career, and they've been invaluable. Some offered guidance; others provided feedback or helped me see possibilities I hadn't thought of. Often the most impactful support came from people who championed me quietly — offering opportunities, visibility, and confidence at key moments. I also see mentoring others as both important and rewarding. For women in tech especially, having someone who understands the landscape and actively supports you can make a significant difference.

### **What inspires and/or motivates you at Jisc?**

I'm inspired by the scale and importance of our mission. The work we do enables education and research across the UK — an extraordinary responsibility and what a massive privilege. I'm motivated by the potential we have to shape the future of digital transformation, improve access, and support education and research that directly influence people's lives. I love working with Jisc's people: their

commitment, creativity, and expertise are remarkable. Creating a culture where everyone can thrive is hugely important to me.

### **What do you think is needed to increase representation of women within tech, particularly in senior leadership roles?**

To increase representation, we need intentional, sustained action, including:

- Clear development pathways that identify and support women early in their tech careers
- Sponsorship as well as mentorship — ensuring women are advocated for, not only advised
- Transparent progression frameworks so opportunities are equitable and visible
- Inclusive cultures where different leadership styles are valued and women aren't expected to fit a predefined mould
- Flexible, modern working practices that recognise the realities of caregiving. I work compressed hours and have since having my children — I am vocal about the benefits of this
- Being visible role models is important and helps counter the perception that senior tech leadership is a male-dominated domain

### **What action do you think is needed to address the gender pay gap?**

Jisc can make meaningful progress by continuing to focus on both equity and culture, which includes strengthening transparency around pay, promotion criteria, and reward decisions. Additionally, to maintain focus on structural issues such as job design, recruitment language, and interview processes that may unintentionally disadvantage women. We need to actively identify and develop internal talent, particularly in tech pathways as well as provide support for returners and career changers, recognising that tech can be an intimidating sector for re-entry. Lastly, to ensure leadership accountability so gender equity becomes part of how success is measured and modelled.

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