

IWG Women and Sport: Year Two Report

1 October 2023 – 30 September 2024

#ShareTheChange



Chair's Foreword

What a privilege it has been to Chair the IWG Women and Sport secretariat during its 30th anniversary year.

The celebrations gave us an opportunity to reflect on the successes for gender equality in sport which have been made since the establishment of the IWG in Brighton back in 1994, but also serve as a stark reminder of the size of the challenge which remains and the importance of the IWG's work on a global basis.

We continue to make good progress against our strategy in driving the IWG forward. Across year two, we have seen more International Federations sign the Brighton plus Helsinki Declaration, increased collaboration with our global stakeholders and the completion of our foundational work for the Global Summit in 2026 ready for us to advance this further as we enter into year three.

We were also delighted to be able to capitalise on the Olympic and Paralympic year by hosting a 'Women in Sport' event at the British Ambassador's Residence in Paris during the Games. With our huge thanks to Dame Menna Rawlings, His Majesty's Ambassador to France, and UK Sport, we were able to bring together 150 senior leaders from International Federations and National Governing Bodies, Sports Ministers, Athletes and Media to share more information on the IWG and the purpose of the network.

We remain grateful to Sport England, UK Sport, the National Lottery, the Sport and Recreation Alliance, Sport Scotland, Sport Wales, University of Hertfordshire and the City of London Corporation for their ongoing support.

Annamarie Phelps CBE OLY
Chair of the IWG UK Secretariat

#ShareTheChange



Secretary General's Introduction

As we pass the halfway mark of the UK hosting the IWG, I'm delighted to present our review of 2023/24.

The primary role of the team at IWG is to support the ongoing development and impact of the IWG global network of networks, whether that be through growing its reach, strengthening connections between its members, or ensuring the free flow of knowledge and insights required by those within the network.

We have sought to work with those aligned with the IWG Vision and Mission and focused our resources on our three strategic priorities 'Connections', 'Insight' and 'Advocacy' as detailed within this review which highlights the progress made up to September 2024, not just here in the UK but worldwide, with the support for our Global Board.

We have also continued to deliver on our commitment to advocate for and demonstrate the impact of investment in sport and physical activity for women and girls at both community and elite level.

Finally, we have used this second year to begin planning in earnest for the 'Women and Girls: The Global Summit' to be held in Birmingham, UK, in July 2026. This will be the foremost gathering of thought leaders from across the sport industry, providing a platform for sharing best practice and the latest insights. We are looking forward to sharing more on our plans for the Global Summit in the year ahead.

A huge thank you to everyone who has supported and worked with us in the past year, we are incredibly grateful.

Lisa O'Keefe MBE

Secretary General of the IWG UK Secretariat



IWG Women and Sport: Strategic Plan 2022-2026

Vision

Sport and physical activity contributing to a world where all women and girls thrive.

Mission

Bring stakeholders together to make the changes needed to the structures and values of sport globally.

Strategic Priorities 2022-26

Connections

Pace and impact of change enhanced through connected and collaborative networks.

Insight

Driving a research and insight led approach to gender equality.

Leadership and Advocacy

Influence policy and strategy through demonstrating the value and impact of systemic gender equality.



IWG Core Values: Collaborative · Inclusive · Open · Impactful



IWG
Women & Sport
#ShareTheChange

Snapshot of Key 2023/24 Activity



December 2023

IWG Global Executive meet in Costa Rica for AGM, including meetings with FISU, Costa Rican Olympic Committee and ICODER (El Instituto Costarricense del Deporte y la Recreación – the Costa Rican Institute of Sports and Recreation)



April 2024

IWG secures exhibition space at the prestigious SportAccord World Sport and Business Summit at the ICC in Birmingham, thanks to the West Midlands Growth Company. Annamarie Phelps CBE OLY also joined a round table discussion on 'enhancing sport performance of female athletes.'



March 2024

With thanks to the Sport and Recreation Alliance, IWG's Secretary General Lisa O'Keefe MBE had the opportunity to introduce HRHs The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh to the IWG. Further engagement with HRH The Duke through IWG activity has since been made possible.



May 2024

For the first time, IWG has been able to offer financial support to advance gender equality, via the Anita White Fund. The fund supported 18 projects across 14 countries and the recipients were announced to as part of the IWG's 30th anniversary celebrations.



July 2024

IWG and the British Embassy in Paris hosted a 'Women In Sport' event during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, in conjunction with UK Sport. Over 150 guests were welcomed into the British Ambassador's Residence, including senior leaders from International Federations and National Governing Bodies, Sports Ministers, athletes and media.



August 2024

The Department for Business and Trade announced the second year of the 'Women's Sport Accelerator Programme' in association with Deloitte's Sports Business Group and supported by the IWG. Created to assist sports rightsholders to capitalise on the growth in fan and investor engagement in women's sport, the programme provides access to specialist knowledge on topics including growing broadcast revenues, unlocking new audiences and best practice in working with investors, whilst networking events provide access to potential investors.

Women's Sport Accelerator Programme Testimonial

"I attended the Women's Sport Accelerator Programme without really knowing what to expect. What I found throughout the programme was hugely engaging, informative and an excellent experience all round. It's easy to not put the time aside to travel and attend, but having done so, it was a very worthwhile investment of my time.

"Engaging and insightful panels, an excellent mentorship arrangement and broad opportunities to meet and converse with others from a wide range of sporting experiences. The discussions, knowledge and guidance gained from the Programme has been significant in both my and our sport's ability to co-ordinate our progress in Women's and girl's sport."

Tony Sutton
CEO Rugby Football League (RFL)



Connections

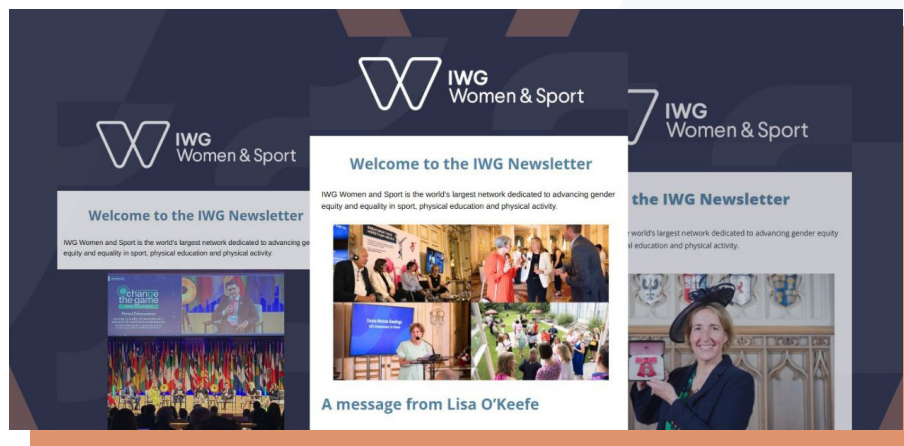
IWG's unique role in global connectivity

This year, we continued our focus on enhancing the scale and reach of the IWG network of networks to enable the flow of knowledge to increase the pace and impact of change for women and girls in and through sport.

We continued to maintain our strong relationships with targeted global stakeholders

- UNESCO – panel role at UNESCO's MINEPS VII, Baku (2023); advisor role during development of UNESCO 'Fit for Life' Programme; attendance at 'Change the Game: Ministerial Forum
- International Olympic Committee (IOC) and European Olympic Committees (EOC) – strengthening of relationship through IWG Chair Annamarie Phelps
- SportAccord – keynote at the SportAccord International Federation (IF) Forum sharing gender equality learning with International Federations of Sport
- SportAccord – formal presence at the SportAccord International Federations Summit (Birmingham) including panel role
- Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) – tagging of sports federation good practice examples on IWG Insight Hub
- Global Observatory for Gender Equality in Sport – member of GO Expert Group shaping strategy and delivery of Global Observatory
- TAFISA – development of plans for closer collaboration in 2025/26





We built an inclusive digital community

- Introduction of monthly IWG Digital Newsletter
- Launch of the IWG Webinar Series
- Promotion and access to live streamed events throughout network
- Development of 'Regional Action Plans' to strengthen the reach and impact of the IWG network of networks around the world



We celebrated IWG's 30th Anniversary

- Celebrated IWG's 30th Anniversary in May with the publication of the history of IWG by Professor Elizabeth Pike. The E-book was made available free through partnership with the University of Hertfordshire
- IWG Webinar Series launched with a look back at key moments in the history of IWG with Dr Anita White CBE and Professor Elizabeth Pike
- Planning underway for a 30th Anniversary celebration event and dinner which will be generously hosted by the City of London in December 2024

For the first time in IWG history, we provided financial support to advance the women and sport movement and promote inclusion, with thanks to the generosity of Dr Anita White CBE and colleagues at UK Sport who enabled the launch of the Anita White Fund (AWF)

The AWF consisted of:

- The Anita White Catalyst Grant for women who have completed leadership programmes to advance the women and sport movement.
- The Cath Sweet Award funded by UK Sport for women who wish to deliver programmes that promote social inclusion through sport with a focus on disability.
- 18 projects funded, delivering impact in 14 different countries.

“I’m delighted to see the Anita White Fund supporting some truly excellent projects led by female sports leaders from across the world.

“One of the things we learned from the Anita White Foundation’s Catalyst Grant Programme was that a relatively small investment could enable women leaders and activists to have a big impact on the lives of women and girls in their communities.”

– Dr Anita White CBE



IWG 2023-2024 Highlight

The Anita White Fund



For the first time in IWGs history, we have been able to offer financial support to advance gender equality, thanks to the Anita White Fund.

“The Anita White Fund is supporting 18 projects across 14 countries which will undoubtedly see an in impact in the respective communities.

“As well as the funding, members of the UK Steering Group have volunteered their time to offer guidance and mentorship to some of the recipients.

“I am looking forward to sharing the success stories and the impact of the Anita White Fund upon conclusion of the projects.

“I would like to reiterate my thanks to Dr Anita White, Cath Sweet’s family, UK Sport for their generosity, and to Professor Elizabeth Pike from the University of Hertfordshire for administering the awards.”

– Lisa O’Keefe MBE



Insight

IWG's unique role in global connectivity

In 2023/24 we continued to drive a research and insight led approach to gender equality.

We made significant improvements to the IWG Insight Hub and supplemented this with the launch of a monthly newsletter, both of which bring together and freely make available the world's best knowledge, tools and event invitations from across the network for everyone to benefit from.

We relaunched the IWG Insight Hub

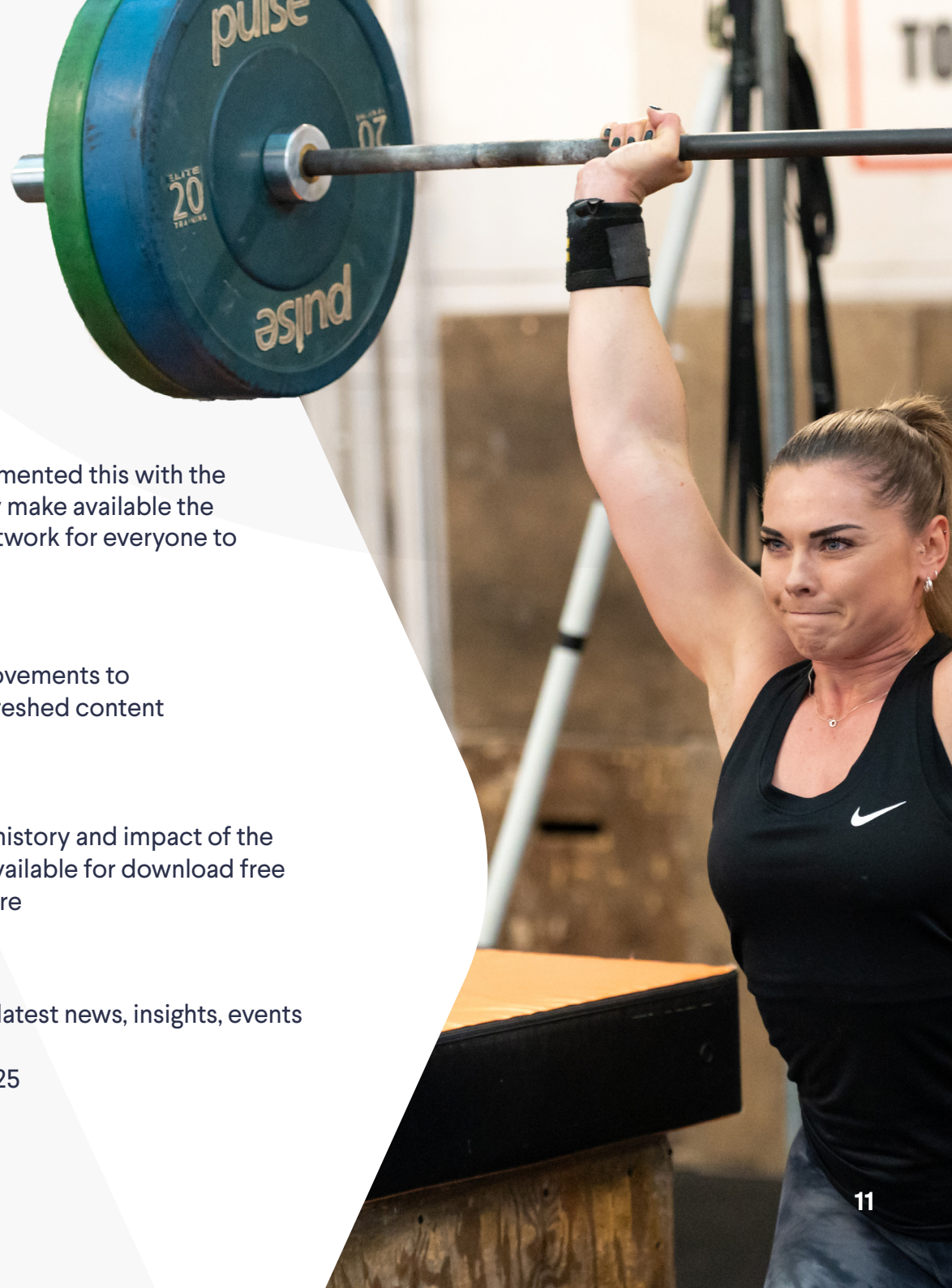
- IWG Insight Hub relaunched following a period of review and improvements to include clearer navigation, improved functionality and regularly refreshed content

We launched the 'Challenge of Change'

- Professor Elizabeth Pike's book 'Challenge of Change' charting the history and impact of the IWG throughout its 30-year history published. The e-book made available for download free of charge thanks to a partnership with the University of Hertfordshire

We established new IWG Resources

- Launch of monthly IWG Digital Newsletter to proactively share the latest news, insights, events and resources with IWG network
- Launch of IWG Webinar Series with future episodes planned for 2025



Advocacy

IWG's commitment to influencing policy and strategy

This year we continued to influence policy and strategy through demonstrating the value and impact of systemic gender equality. We placed a focus on events and platforms that would enable us to share learning and influence the thinking of priority stakeholders and networks.

We also continued to promote the Brighton plus Helsinki Declaration, signing up new organisations committed to its principles and sharing learning through the network.



We undertook a programme of work targeting International and National Federations of Sport with a focus on the value and impact of investing in opportunities for women and girls

- Keynote at the SportAccord International Federations Forum, Lausanne
- Panel guest at SportAccord Summit, Birmingham
- Partner stand at SportAccord Summit, Birmingham 2024 enabling discussions with range of International and National Federations
- Event held at British Ambassador's Residence (Paris) during Olympic Games. Senior leaders from World Rugby and World Equestrian Federation sharing learning and impact of sustained investment in women and girls sport to audience of senior Federation leaders and other members of Olympic Family
- International Tennis Federation (ITF), Finding the Leader Within You Session, Wimbledon Championships
- Collaboration with the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) and Deloitte's Sports Business Group to launch the second year of the 'Women's Sport Accelerator Programme' developed to assist sports rightsholders to capitalise on the growth in fan and investor engagement in women's sport.



We advocated on a range of platforms including:

- South African Women and Sport Foundation National Advocacy Conference
- EU Gender Equality in Sport Conference under the Framework of the Spanish Presidency.
- European Summit on Gender Equality and Diversity in Sport
- GM Moving Conference, Manchester
- Anthropy23, Cornwall
- WiMENA Women in Sport Conference
- ASEAN-Japan Actions on Sports: Gender Equality
- International University Sports Federation (FISU) Gender Equality webinar

We expanded our partnerships to share learning and impact of gender equality

- Continued to grow and promote the work of Brighton plus Helsinki Declaration by adding more signatories including:
 - World Rowing
 - International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation
 - British Waterski and Wakeboard
 - 2GAP
 - World Netball
 - World Netball Foundation
- Ongoing discussions with International and National sports organisations interested in signing the Declaration



We started to build momentum towards The Global Summit

- Establishment of Summit Corporate Partnerships Group
- Appointment of Event Producer and development of draft Global Summit plan

We continued to provide input to share learning and shape thinking:

- Representation on England Netball's NETBALLHer Advisory Board
- Consulted during World Wheelchair Rugby's 'Global Advancement of female participation in Wheelchair Rugby research'
- Expert advisor to 'Raising the Bar' An independent report into the future of women's football in England
- Standing member of the Board of Women's Sport (UK)



IWG 2023-2024 Highlight IWG Event during Paris 2024

“

“The IWG ‘Women in Sport’ Event which was kindly hosted by the British Ambassador to France in conjunction with UK Sport was a key highlight for the 2023-2024 period.

“The event brought together over 150 senior leaders from International Federations and National Governing Bodies, Sports Ministers, athletes and media and was a fantastic opportunity to showcase how the IWG can support organisations and individuals through insightful presentations and discussions with colleagues from FEI and World Rugby.

“This was a fantastic platform to explain to an influential international audience about the purpose of the IWG network.”

– Annamarie Phelps CBE OLY

Regional Reports

The IWG Global Executive consists of experts in the field of gender equality and equity from around the world, giving the IWG a unique opportunity to undertake activity on a global scale.

Americas and Caribbean

Rosaura Mendez Gamboa

- Continued development of the Ibero-American Network for Women and Sports
- Actions from the University Sports Declaration of the Costa Rica Forum ODS 5 actions include for FISU to promote the role of university sport to empower women and propose solutions; to improve its procedures and rules to include more women in leadership positions and to promote existing initiatives and value the positive projects developed by its membership on the theme of Gender Equality
- Sports events organized from University Sports where a gender perspective is applied, for example Costa Rica University Cycling Championship 2024

Europe

Tarja Krum

- Launched a research initiative to monitor the implementation of gender equality policies in sports organisations in Europe, in collaboration to advance the 'All in Plus' project and demonstrate the benefits of gender equality in sport.
- Strengthened European sports organisations capacity through workshops, online seminars and European events.
- Hosted the 'European Summit on Gender Equality and Diversity in Sport', which gathered the key European organisations who work for equality within sports.
- Organized the 'EU-Balkan Networking Event on Gender Equality and Diversity' in Kosovo, strengthening cooperation between EU and Balkan countries on gender equality in sport.
- Increased visibility for equality in sport through participation in 20+ European events, reaching 2,200 people

Africa

Game Mothibi

- Restructured and repositioned the Women Sport Africa Network
- Creation of regional representatives and hubs for ease of communications and for extended reach and impact of network
- Focus on expansion of safeguarding training and strategies across the continent

Asia

Etsuko Ogasawara

- Development of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Women and Sports network by the Japan Sports Agency and the Seijo University.
- Connection made with ASEAN Secretariat
- Supported launch of the Kuwait Women in Sport Leadership Programme at British Embassy, Kuwait
- Collaboration with WiMENA (Women in Middle East North Africa) including panel role at London conference.
- Preparations underway for 10th Anniversary of Japanese Center for Research on Women in Sport (JCRWS) including international symposium
- Annual Women Leaders Academy, November 2024

Oceania

Carolyn Ngiraidis

- Focussed on safeguarding and creating a safe space for athletes and officials
- More work completed to understand the need to transition roles and responsibilities to emerging young women leaders and creation of succession plans
- Safeguarding social marketing campaign at the Pacific Games in the Solomons run by UN Women and Teams Up during weeks of competition. The aim is to engage athletes and officials in many conversations to improve visibility and results presented to the Impact Network Project.

Co-opted Member Reports

Lilamani de Soysa

- Facilitated Brighton plus Helsinki Declaration signing by 2GAP
- Collaborated on a Table Tennis and education programme for girls in Lesotho in partnership with Dolen Cymru, Swaythling Club, Heal Our Land Organisation (HOLO)
- Publication in progress of a book on menstruation and sport

Louissette-Renee Thobi

- As Secretary General for CONFEJES, secured funding of the Calls for Women, Sport and Health Projects: 13 projects financed to the tune of 50 million CFA francs in 6 Member States and Governments (EGMs)
- The collection of statistics on the representativeness of women in Youth, Sports and Leisure in the EGMs
- The celebration of the International Women's Sports Day in 12 EGMs

NGO Reports

WSI

Diane Huffman

- Prepared and monitored a gender-focussed research project on leadership of persons with disabilities in sport in Southern Africa, resulting in exploring more opportunities for funding partnerships through collaborative approaches
- Increased recognition of our role and Board member accomplishments resulting in requests for Board members advice and support to other organisations
- Strong communications on issues and opportunities for women and girls in sport resulting in a doubling of WSI's Facebook, Linked-In and X following and engagement.

IAPESGW

Rosa Diketmüller

- Prepared to host International Symposiums in different regions, including in Morocco and Iran in November 2024
- Celebrated 75th Anniversary of IAPESGW as well as significant milestones for sister organisations including the Austrian, Japanese and Korean Associations
- Launched the 20th Quadrennial IAPESGW Congress scheduled to take place in the Philippines in 2025.

A huge thank you to our UK Steering Committee for their ongoing support of the IWG.

IWG UK Steering Committee 2023-2024:

Naomi Angell-Hicks, former Director of Engagement and External Affairs at UK Sport

Jeanette Bain-Burnett, Executive Director for Policy and Integrity at Sport England

Rupinder Bains, Managing Director of Pinder Reaux & Associates

Vikram Banerjee, Director of Strategy and Corporate Development at the England and Wales Cricket Board

Clare Barrell, Director International Relations and Member Services at World Rugby

Mel Bound, Founder and CEO of This Mum Runs

Ali Donnelly, CEO of More Than Equal

Katie Fawcner-Corbett, Head of Strategy at the General Medical Council

Tanya Joseph, former Managing Director for Corporate Affairs at Hill and Knowlton

Joel Lavery, Strategic Lead on Major Sporting Events for the West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC)

Professor Elizabeth Pike, Head of the Institute of Sport at the University of Hertfordshire

Lisa Wainright MBE, CEO of the Sport and Recreation Alliance

Jessica Williams, Head of Service and Partner Development at Sport Wales