



## Booking.com Opens Nominations for Technology Playmaker Awards 2019 to Celebrate and Recognize Inspiring Women in Technology

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AMSTERDAM, September 17, 2018 /PRNewswire/ --

- *Following the success of the inaugural awards, the Booking.com Technology Playmaker Awards 2019 are now open for global entries at <http://www.techplaymakerawards.com>*
- *Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in London, UK, on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019*
- *As part of Booking.com's commitment to drive awareness of gender diversity in the global technology sector, the awards shine a light on women making an impact with technology and inspiring future female tech leaders*
- *Over one in two (52%) women working in technology or students interested in the field say a lack of visible role models or mentors across the global tech sector is a major barrier to entry, according to new Booking.com research.*

Today, Booking.com, one of the world's largest travel e-commerce companies launched the [Technology Playmaker Awards 2019](#). Introduced by Booking.com in 2017, the awards aim to recognize and celebrate women who are pushing the boundaries of innovation in technology and inspiring future generations of female technology leaders to do the same. This year, the awards are open to nominations from any country, to spotlight the diversity of talent in the global technology sector and encourage more girls and women worldwide to enter and succeed in the field. Nominations can be submitted at <http://techplaymakerawards.com>, in any language, before December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018.

Winners will be selected in seven distinct [award categories](#), each of which celebrates a different aspect of achievement in technology: *Role Model, Young Technologist, Business Leader, Digital Leader, Employer Award, Community Impact Award* and *Tech Innovator*. The awards are open to women at all levels in any technology or IT-related field who are disrupting or transforming business, industry or communities using technology. The Employer Award recognizes an organization that has made significant progress in achieving gender diversity and inclusion in IT and technology.

The overall Booking.com Technology Playmaker of the Year 2019 will be chosen from among the individual category winners, and will be the person who our judging panel of industry leaders, politicians and academics consider to have made the most impactful change in the global technology sector. In identifying and championing remarkable examples of leadership, courage, ingenuity, tenacity and innovation in technology, the awards aim to empower the next generation of women to consider a career in tech and advance dialogue on the need for greater diversity. Each category winner will receive a monetary prize of €5,000 to help advance business and professional goals, with the overall winner collecting a €10,000 award.

"Encouraging more women to join and flourish in the tech sector is essential if innovation is to reflect and nurture the diverse communities that surround us. Creating a more diverse and inclusive workforce takes collaborative effort from companies, both inside and outside their own walls, as well as individuals whose example carries immense power to positively shape the collective destiny of this sector," says Gillian Tans, Booking.com CEO.

"We need to create an environment in which more girls and women are encouraged to enter the field, and given more opportunities to advance, thrive and succeed. While there is more work to be done, great strides are being made thanks to the kind of businesses, communities and individuals we seek to unearth and recognize through the Booking.com Technology Playmaker Awards."

New global research from Booking.com sheds light into the key barriers for women to enter in the tech sector. Over one in two (52%) women working in tech or students interested in the field say a lack of visible role models or mentors across the global tech sector is a major barrier to entry for women. Another half (50%) say they are held back because the opportunities for women to advance in technology are not made clear. These are the gender diversity challenges that Booking.com seeks to unearth and help address through this awards program and other related initiatives.

The 2018 Booking.com Technology Playmaker of the Year, Hadeel Ayoub, CEO and founder of BrightSign, was honored for developing a smart "sign-to-speech" glove that helps individuals with speech disabilities communicate more easily by converting sign language to computerized voice.

For the 2019 awards, she will join the judging panel alongside a range of tech leaders and champions from business, academia and politics.

"I truly believe in the power of bringing women together to network and celebrate one another in order to make the technology sector more diverse and gender-inclusive. I was delighted to be recognized by Booking.com at the 2018 Technology Playmaker Awards, bringing further attention to BrightSign and helping my team and I continue to follow our passion to help people with non-verbal disabilities," says Hadeel. "I'm very much looking forward to working with the other judges, hearing the stories of women doing great things with technology around the world and identifying the 2019 Playmakers."

The Technology Playmaker Awards 2018 attracted entries from inspirational female tech entrepreneurs and innovators across Europe, highlighting their achievements across technology fields such as ecommerce, fintech, green energy, education tech, blockchain and consumer tech.

The Booking.com Technology Playmaker Awards 2019 will gather together luminaries, leaders and supporters of women in technology from around the world in London, UK, on March 13, 2019. Nominations for the awards will close on December 22, 2018

Along with this initiative, Booking.com will also be partnering with the Web Summit in Lisbon on November 5-8, 2018 for a Women in Tech mentorship program.

### Notes to Editor:

Research commissioned by Booking.com and independently conducted among 6,898 respondents (from the UK, USA, France, Brazil, The

Netherlands, Germany, China, Australia, India and Spain). Respondents completed an online survey from August 2<sup>nd</sup> to September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

**About Booking.com:**

Established in 1996 in Amsterdam, Booking.com B.V. has grown from a small Dutch start-up to one of the largest travel e-commerce companies in the world. Part of Booking Holdings Inc. (NASDAQ: BKNG), Booking.com now employs more than 17,000 employees in 198 offices in 70 countries worldwide.

With a mission to empower people to experience the world, Booking.com invests in digital technology that helps take the friction out of travel. At Booking.com, we connect travellers with the world's largest selection of incredible places to stay, including everything from apartments, vacation homes, and family-run B&Bs to 5-star luxury resorts, tree houses and even igloos. The Booking.com website and mobile apps are available in 43 languages, offer over 28.9 million total reported listings, including more than 5.6 million listings of homes, apartments and other unique places to stay, and cover more than 140,000 destinations in 231 countries and territories worldwide.

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+31-(0)20-709-4743