WOMEN'S TECHNOLOGY EMPOWERMENT CENTRE (W.TEC)



PROFILE

JAN 2024

ABOUT W.TEC

The **Women's Technology Empowerment Centre (W.TEC)** is a Nigerian nonprofit organisation committed to building a more inclusive technology ecosystem, with the next generation of women technology creators, entrepreneurs and leaders. In 2018, our work has expanded to explore how technology can improve learning outcomes and better integrate students with developmental disabilities and special needs, such as Autism and Down's syndrome.

Our programmes encourage more girls to pursue technology careers and support women (entrepreneurs and in civil society) to use technology confidently to increase their economic power and ability to speak about issues affecting their lives.

Our programmes include:

- Early Innovators Camp (5 9 years)
- She Creates Technology Camp (13 17 years)
- · W.TEC Academy Afterschool Technology Clubs (10 17 years)
- · Inclusive Technology for All (3 20 years students with Developmental Disabilities)
- · SHE CAN WITH ICT (Technology for Entrepreneurship)
- · Staying Safe Online (Seminar School Series)
- · MentorHER (Mentorship & Leadership for Female STEM Undergraduates)

This is done through technology trainings, mentoring, work placement and research. W.TEC works in partnership with local and international NGOs, educational and research organizations.

W.TEC was set-up in January 2008 and conceived in response to research that showed that although ICTs significantly contribute to a nation's development and growth, women – who make-up approximately half of Nigeria's population – are severely lagging behind in their knowledge and use of technology.

MISSION:

To educate, connect and empower Nigerian women through active engagement with information and communication technology via training, mentoring and research.

VISION:

A society where Nigerian women and girls are able to create and use information and communication technology for learning, activism, entrepreneurship, and professional activities effectively.

GOALS:

- To equip girls with the skills to create technology and digital content
- · To educate girls about and inspire them to pursue science and technologyrelated career opportunities
- To support girls as they embark on a science and technology-related career path
- · To produce innovative and ground-breaking research that supports the development and implementation of technology programmes for women and girls
- · To promote and support the use of ICT in uplifting women's rights
- · To establish a network of technology-fluent alumni and mentors

STRATEGY:

Our programmes are a combination of the following activities:

- **Technology Classes:** Aimed at developing a high degree of proficiency using and creating technology.
- **Mentoring Opportunities:** With experienced technology professionals and with women using ICTs in creative ways
- **Research:** W.TEC conducts research into the diverse ways women are using technology with a specific focus on how they could better utilise technology for social and economic empowerment

IMPORTANCE OF CLOSING THE GENDER DIGITAL GAP:

According to the <u>EQUALS Research Report 2019</u> on the gender digital gap, only 35% of women major in STEM subjects at higher education. In Nigeria, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, women makeup on average just 22% of the total number of Engineering and Technology university graduates each year.

The <u>UNESCO 2017 Cracking the Code Report</u> explains that STEM underpins the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and leaving out girls and women and other marginalised groups from STEM education and careers is a loss for all of society.

<u>Data from the World Economic Forum</u> shows that, across industries, many job roles will be significantly based on and enhanced by the use of science, technology, engineering and design. Without the technical and creative skills to work in and thrive in these industries, women will be shut-off from these important economic opportunities.

A <u>report by McKinsey</u> on Closing the Gender Gap emphasised the need to design interventions for those facing the most barriers to STEM education such as women and girls

Our programmes seeks to provide girls comfortable and safe spaces based in their local communities, where they can learn about and develop skills in STEAM subjects and consequently be empowered to contribute meaningfully to the digital economy.

PROGRAMMES:

A) FOR GIRLS (11 – 17 YEARS)

1) EARLY INNOVATORS CAMP

The **EARLY INNOVATORS CAMP** is a 2-week day camp open to both girls and boys aged 5 to 9 years old, which teaches technology in a fun way and utilizes a hands-on and project-based methodology.

Typical technologies taught include ScratchJr, Scratch and Kudo for creating video games.

Launched in 2017, the Early Innovators Camp reaches an average of 15 students each camp.

Learn more: https://wtec.org.ng/early-innovators-camp-3/

2) SHE CREATES CAMP

The **SHE CREATES CAMP** is a residential programme for girls aged 13 to 17 years and helps to intervene early, combat stereotypes and tackle the technology gender divide. The camps take place in Lagos, Ibadan (Oyo State) and Awka (Anambra State). It provides a high quality and exciting environment where the girls learn to create useful technologies for everyday living through programming, mobile application development, graphics designing, film-making and digital animation programming. This helps schoolgirls develop an early interest in computer science, information technology and related careers.

Through a mix of classes, workshops, presentations, excursions and leadership exercises, we endeavour to build strong, intelligent and focused young women, well-prepared for living and working in an increasingly technology-driven world.

Partners and supporters have included Union Bank, MainOne, General Electric, Internet Society (ISOC), Intel, Amadeus, Google, Microsoft, World Bank, Swift Networks, Omatek Computers, Rutgers University Women in Computer Science Department, Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology, Lagos State Ministry of Education and Laureates College – Lagos.

Learn more: https://wtec.org.ng/she-creates-camp-2/

3) W.TEC ACADEMY

The **W.TEC ACADEMY** is an after-school technology programme for girls in public secondary schools, designed to inspire girls to pursue computer science careers. With clubs in Lagos and Kwara states, the girls go through through a year-long computing curriculum, which includes modules such as Computer Architecture, Scratch Programming and Alice Programming. Through their participation in the technology clubs, the girls become more confident in writing programmes, developing applications and creating digital content. This programme was designed to complement the existing computer science curriculum in the schools, which tends to focus more on theoretical knowledge than practical experience.

Partners and supporters have included Oracle, Intel, WeTech, Google, Lagos State Ministry of Education, Kwara State Ministry of Education, the National Library Yaba, FEMTECH and SoftTrade.

Learn more: https://wtec.org.ng/w-tec-academy/

4) STAYING SAFE ONLINE

The **STAYING SAFE ONLINE** programme introduces and covers the foundation of digital security, where girls and young women learn strategies to stay safe online. This programme runs throughout the year, particularly during the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based violence (November to December) and Safer Internet Day (February) each year.

5) INCLUSIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR ALL (IT4ALL)

The "Inclusive Technology for All (IT4All)" is a technology-based learning initiative, in partnership with the Children's Developmental Centre (CDC), for students with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Through weekly workshops, students participate in STEM workshops, developing digital, building and programming skills. The IT4All programme also seeks to use technology to encourage and direct the students' creativity and improve their problem solving skills. It also equips teachers to enhance their regular classroom teaching using digital tools.

B) FOR WOMEN (18+ YEARS)

1) MentorHER

The **MentorHER** programme is a mentorship and leadership programme for female undergraduates studying Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) courses at Nigerian tertiary institutions.

It provides a platform for the young women to get valuable technical guidance and life skills from experienced STEM professional women, required to become science and technology leaders in their academic and professional careers.

MentorHER achieves its goals by:

- · Helping mentees develop individual roadmaps to clarify and achieve their career goals
- Providing information about career options to female STEM university and polytechnic students
- Equipping mentees with important leadership and life skills that will enable them chart successful and impactful careers
- · Requiring that mentees organise workshops to share information about STEM careers to other young women

Learn more: https://wtec.org.ng/mentorship/

2) SHE CAN with ICT - Sustaining Her Enterprise, Career, and Network with ICT

SHE CAN WITH ICT focuses on increasing the number and viability of female-owned technology businesses by equipping more women entrepreneurs to use technology strategically to leverage economic opportunities for their businesses.

The initiative started in 2015 in collaboration with Diamond Bank and saw 100 young women with small businesses in the city of Ibadan, Oyo state, gaining ICT skills to grow their businesses. The 2017 edition, in partnership with Intel and MainOne Cable, provided 250 female undergraduates from the University of Lagos with entreprenurial and technology training and mentoring to develop their 'side hustles' into structured businesses that would provide employment after graduation. Workshops included Business Plan Development, Accounting, Social Media and Productivity Tools. Six participants benefited from seed capital and three from travel exchange opportunities to South Africa.

Partners and supporters have included the United States Consulate Public Affairs Section, Union Bank, Leadway Assurance, Global Shapers – Lagos Hub, FEEEDS Advocacy Initiative (founded by former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, Dr. Robin Sanders), Western Union Foundation, Diamond Bank and Intel.

Learn more: https://wtec.org.ng/shecanwithict-2/

C) ALUMNA NETWORK

Past trainees and participants of W.TEC training programmes will graduate into the W.TEC Alumna Programme. Alumna activities include annual gatherings and membership to the alumni network and mailing lists, where career and other development information will be disseminated.

D) RESEARCH, POLICY & DISCOURSE

W.TEC organises public discussions and research to explore technology's potential for women's social and economic empowerment.

RESEARCH:

Past research projects include 'Radio for Women's Development: Examining the Relationship between Access and Impact' (Case Study). This project was funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and administered by Carleton University, Canada. The findings of this research project were a key resource in setting-up Nigeria's first women-focused radio station – W FM 91.7.

DISCOURSE:

Discussion and learning for ainclude 9 successful events at Social Media Week Lagos over the last 6 years:

- Panel discussion at Social Media Week Lagos 2020 titled Women Build Technology Too
- Masterclasses at Social Media Week Lagos 2018 and 2019 on Online Fundraising Strategies and Storytelling for Amplifying Social Impact
- A panel discussion at Social Media Week Lagos 2017 on <u>Parenting in an Era of Technology</u>
- One panel discussion and one debate at Social Media Week Lagos 2016 on The Connected Business Woman and Social Media in Schools
- Two discussion events at Social Media Week Lagos 2015 on <u>Smart Mobile Divas</u> and <u>Where Are the Women?</u>
- · One panel discussion at Social Media Week Lagos 2014 on <u>Doing Business</u> the <u>Social Way</u>.

All events had the venues filled to capacity with very energised and excited audiences; and we all enjoyed the interesting and enlightening discussions among the speakers.

SHE TALKS TECH:

She Talks Tech is a women's-focused show aimed at presenting technology in a fun, accessible and practical way.

Research shows that digital technology has the potential to improve women's quality of life, but much of this potential is unfulfilled due to structural factors like prohibitive cost of access. Some research also shows radio to be a more accessible

tool for women than many other ICTs – especially within an African context – due to cheaper costs, less dependence on electricity and literacy, and the ability to provide information in local languages. Research by the Women's Technology Empowerment Centre (W.TEC) in 2013 indicated that "there is a need for a **greater diversity of women's programmes**, with women stating **an interest in programmes about technology, career development and education**."

Although the primary focus of the programme is technology, the show features discussions around the broader STEAM topics i.e. science, technology, engineering, arts and technology, as well as exploring the intersections of technology with current affairs.

POLICY:

As well as capacity-building programmes, W.TEC has also been active in shaping public poL

icy. W.TEC was invited, as part of a sub-committee of Gender, Science, Technology and Inn

ovation experts, to review and help re-draft parts of the science and technology policy. W.TEC was also invited to join a team of experts to draft a policy document for broadband deployment in Nigeria and which would form the preliminary document of the eventual national broadband plan.

IMPACT:

NUMBERS:

- o In 2023, W.TEC reached **4,077** girls, boys, women, young people with special needs
- o In 2022, W.TEC reached **8,143** girls and young women
- o In 2021, W.TEC reached **2,647** girls and young women
- o In 2020, W.TEC reached **943** girls and young women
- o In 2019, W.TEC reached **4,490** girls, teachers, officials and other stakeholders
- o In 2018, W.TEC reached **4,008** girls, teachers, officials and other stakeholders
- o In 2017, W.TEC reached **4,176** girls, teachers, officials and other stakeholders
- o In 2016, W.TEC reached 4, 261 girls, teachers, officials and other stakeholders
- o In 2015, W.TEC reached **5,016** women and girls through our programmes
- o In 2014, W.TEC reached **1.632** women and girls through our programmes
- o In 2013, W.TEC reached **2,207** women and girls; **21** teachers
- o In 2012, W.TEC reached **2,397** women and girls
- o In 2011, W.TEC reached **1,713** women and girls
- o In 2010, W.TEC reached **1,500** women and girls
- o In 2008 and 2009, W.TEC impacted **230** women and girls
- o TOTAL (2008 2023): 47,461 women, girls, boys (and teachers)

PROGRAMME STATS & MILESTONES:

 67.7% of alumnae surveyed stated that W.TEC Camp encouraged them to pursue STEM career

- o 35.4% of alumnae currently studying STEM degree at tertiary level
- o 56.9% of alumnae have used technology skills & knowledge to earn income
- o W.TEC camp helped **70%** of our alumnae develop more confidence
- o In 2014, the Federal Ministry of Communication Tech with W.TEC implemented the **first nation-wide girls' technology club**
- Contributions to Public Policy: In 2011, W.TEC, as part of a sub-committee of experts, reviewed the gender section of the draft science and technology policy. In 2010, W.TEC worked with a team to draft a policy document for broadband deployment in Nigeria.
- o In August 2010, W.TEC opened the HUB an Internet café and training centre which has so far served 1,200 clients.

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS:

- The following organisations have supported W.TEC's programmes in cash and in-kind:
 - Adobe Youth Foundation
 - Amadeus
 - o Anita Borg Institute for Women in Technology U.S.A
 - o Fahamu Kenya
 - o Flour Mills of Nigeria plc
 - o General Electric
 - o Google Inc.
 - o Intel
 - o International Development Research Centre Canada
 - Internet Society (ISOC)
 - Kwara State Ministry of Education
 - Lagos State Ministry of Education
 - o Laureates College Lagos, Nigeria
 - Leadway Assurance
 - o Main One
 - Microsoft
 - Nokia
 - o Omatek Computers
 - Oracle
 - o Rutgers University's Women in Computer Science U.S.A
 - Sage Foundation
 - Swift Networks
 - Union Bank Nigeria
 - WeTech (Women Enhancing Technology)
 - World Bank
 - Media: Silverbird, AIT, Bella Naija, Africa Magic, DBN, Punch, Guardian, Business Day, The Nation, Champion, Classic 97.3 FM, NEXT 234, Nigeria Info 99.3 FM, Vanguard, News Agency of Nigeria, NTA 2 Channel 5, NTA Lagos Channel 10, Daily Independent, TW Magazine, Momentum Magazine, Tech Loy, Technology Times, BellaNaija, Tech Trends, DO IT! Magazine, Inspire

Africa ('Moments with Mo' and 'Naija Diamonds'), New African Woman magazine, Technology Times, Tech 360, Tech Cabal

CLIENTS:

- W.TEC has provided consultancy, research, website design or training services to the following clients:
 - Association for Progressive Communications (APC)
 - Bank of Industry
 - o BAOBAB For Women's Human Rights
 - o Broadband For Nigeria Project
 - Casa dei Bambini / Lagos Montessori School
 - Children's Development Centre (CDC)
 - Diamond Bank
 - Ergo Advisors
 - o Fahamu Kenya
 - o Federal Ministry of Communication Technology
 - o Federal Ministry of Science & Technology
 - FEEEDS Advocacy Initiative (Founded by former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, Dr. Robin Sanders)
 - o Lagos State Ministry of Education
 - o Laureates College Lagos, Nigeria
 - Priory Prep School
 - o Talent Plus Resource International
 - Western Union Foundation

AWARDS & HONOURS:

- 2022 Special Commendation from Federal Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy
- 2021 W.TEC granted special consultative status by the United Nations' Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) – Brief on ECOSOC website
- 2020 WSIS Prizes Champion (Access to Information and Knowledge Category)
 https://twitter.com/WSISprocess/status/1240658480568184832
- 2019 EQUALS in Tech Awards (Skills Category)
- o 2019 NEDIS (Nigerian Education Innovation Summit) Gender-Focused Education Intervention Recognition Award
- 2019 NIRA (Nigeria Internet Registration Association) Presidential Award for Women's Development
- 2018 & 2017 WSIS (World Summit on Information Society) Prizes Nominee Category 4 (Capacity Building)
- 2016 YNaija!'s Top 100 Young People in Technology Award for W.TEC Executive Director, Oreoluwa Lesi
- 2015 Award Winner from Lagos State Government "Support Our Schools" Initiative Corporate Social Responsibility Awards

- 2014 Finalist Gender Equality Mainstreaming- Technology (GEM-TECH)
 Award (Category 5: Closing the ICT Gender Gap)
- 2014 Vital Voices Fellowship for W.TEC Executive Director, Oreoluwa Somolu
- 2014 'Chosen Youth' Leadership Award for W.TEC Executive Director, Oreoluwa Somolu – From LaRoche Foundation
- 2014 Outstanding Role Model for W.TEC From Africa Mouthpiece International Magazine
- 2014 YNaija!'s Top 100 Young People in Technology Award for W.TEC Executive Director, Oreoluwa Lesi
- o 2013 <u>Ashoka Fellowship</u> for W.TEC Executive Director, Oreoluwa Somolu, awarded to leading global social entrepreneurs http://bit.ly/14ssEA8
- 2012 Naija Diamond Recognition by Diamond Bank & Inspire Africa Recognition as a Nigerian change maker
- o 2010 Vision 2020: Youth Empowerment & Restoration Initiative Award For contributions to youth development
- o 2010 W.TEC used as *Case Study of Use of Social Media for Advocacy* by Tactical Technology Collective
- o 2009 Anita Borg Change Agent For contributions to women in computing
- o 2009 Highlighted as *Best Practice for use of ICT for Community Transformation* by *UN-GAID*
- 2009 <u>Recognition for Supporting Girls in ICT</u> by Plan International http://bit.ly/5RowZ
- o 2008 African ICT Achievers Award (Nominee) Johannesburg, South Africa
- o 2008 Anita Borg Systers Pass It On Award Winner

W.TEC IN THE MEDIA

- 1) News Article This Day Newspaper, "United Nations, W.TEC Urge FG to Invest in Girl Child, Insist on Technology Education" (Oct. 2022): https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/10/13/united-nations-w-tec-urge-fg-to-invest-in-girl-child-insist-on-technology-education/
- 2) News Article Guardian Newspaper, "W.TEC bridges gaps between girls, technology acquisition" (Sep. 2022): https://guardian.ng/technology/w-tec-bridges-gaps-between-girls-technology-acquisition/
- 3) News Article This Day Newspaper, "W.TEC Graduates over 600 Girls in ICT Skills in 14 Years" (Aug. 2022): https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/08/22/w-tec-graduates-over-600-girls-in-ict-skills-in-14-years/
- 4) News Article This Day Newspaper, "WTEC Graduates 43 in Skills Acquisition, Offers Grant" (Aug. 2022):

https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/08/11/wtec-graduates-43-in-skills-acquisition-offers-grant/

- 5) W.TEC Video Interview on BBC Africa (May 2020): https://bit.ly/3hSmuA4
- 6) A Letter to W.TEC in TIME Magazine (Jan. 2020): https://time.com/5764511/open-letters-to-youth-activists/
- 7) News Article on 2019 She Creates Camp Lagos (Sep. 2019): https://punchng.com/wtec-empowers-50-schoolgirls-on-technology-skills/
- 8) News Article on Visit of from Sir Tim Berners-Lee (Inventor of the World Wide Web The Nation Newspaper (Mar. 2019): https://thenationonlineng.net/world-wide-web-founder-sir-berners-lee-inspires-girls-in-lagos/
- 9) News Article about the W.TEC Girls Technology Camp "Closing the Gender Gap" http://www.gereportsafrica.com/post/96516957408/closing-the-gender-tech-gap
- 10) Article about Camp on Woodrow Wilson Center blog (2013): http://africaupclose.wilsoncenter.org/starting-young-the-w-tec-girls-technology-camp/
- 11) "The Power Inside", short film produced by Intel about the 2013 camp: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6LcpmsHzBM
- 12) Wikipedia page on W.TEC: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s Technology Empowerment Centre

W.TEC BOARD:

TRUSTEES:

- Engr. Christiana Adelowo (Chair) Founder/Chief Executive Officer, Fechrad Nigeria Limited
- **Dr. Olatokunbo Somolu** (Secretary) Retired Group General Manager, Engineering & Technology, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation
- · Mr. Ibikunle Williams Founder/Chief Executive Officer, Pace Technologies
- · **Mrs. Oreoluwa Lesi** Executive Director, Women's Technology Empowerment Centre

ADVISORY BOARD:

- · Arinola Fetuga, Dr: HR Specialist (Nigeria)
- · Chidiogo Victor-Willie: Sales Executive, MuleSoft (Canada)
- **Eniola Harrison**: Director, IE Africa Center, IE University (Belgium)

- · **Mojisola Ogunsulire, MBA, FCA**: Independent Management Consultant (Nigeria)
- · Olubunmi Shonde: Behavioural Therapist, Private Practice (Nigeria)
- Rotola Ogunye: Independent Consultant (Transformation & Growth) (USA)
- Sandra Oyewole: Partner & Head, General Practice Group, Olajide Oyewole LLP (Nigeria)
- · **Toyin Ajao, PhD**: Director, iAfrika (Nigeria)
- Tunji Adegbesan, PhD: Founder & CEO Gidi Mobile (Nigeria)

KEY W.TEC PERSONNEL

FOUNDER/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Mrs. Oreoluwa Somolu Lesi is Executive Director of the Women's Technology Empowerment Centre (W.TEC).

Oreoluwa worked for several years in the United States researching gender and technology issues and helping to develop and implement programmes aimed at attracting more girls and women to study and work in science and technology-related fields.

She has a Bachelors degree in Economics from Essex University, U.K. a Masters degree in Analysis, Design and Management of Information Systems from the London School of Economics & Political Science and a Certificate in Applied Sciences from Harvard University's Extension School. Her interests are the applications of technology in improving lifelong learning and also to raise the economic and social conditions of people (especially women and children) in the developing world.

Her publications include 'Radio for Women's Development: Examining the Relationship Between Access and Impact' (Nokoko: Journal of the Institute of African Studies, Carleton University – Canada, 2013), 'Networking for Success' (i4d: Information for Development Online Journal, 2009), 'Telling Our Own Stories: African Women Blogging for Social Change' (Gender & Development Journal, 2006) and 'Making the Most of On-line Learning: An Introduction to Learning on the Internet' (Education Development Center, 2004).

She is a 2014 <u>Vital Voices Lead fellow</u> and a 2013 <u>Ashoka fellow</u> and a recipient of the <u>Anita Borg Change Agent Award</u> for her commitment to issues of women in computing in Nigeria.

SENIOR PROGRAMME MANAGER - PARTNERSHIPS: Mrs. Folashade Braimoh is a Senior Programme Manager of W.TEC. She is mainly responsible for providing support for the smooth and effective implementation of W.TEC's programmes and activities, with special focus on partnership building and relationship management.

Among her responsibilities, she supervises the W.TEC Academy and coordinates the research and documentation activities of the organisation.

Folashade has a Bachelors degree in Information Resources Management from Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS LEAD: **Mr. Adeyemi Odutola** is the External Relations Lead of W.TEC, where he is responsible for coordinating and implementing W.TEC's media strategy. He also assists with training, developing curricula and sustainability planning.

Adeyemi has a Post-graduate Diploma in Marketing from the National Institutes of Marketing, a Higher National Diploma in Marketing and an Ordinary National Diploma in Business Administration from the Yaba College of Technology, Lagos, Nigeria.

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Twitter, Instagram & TikTok: @wteconline

Videos: www.youtube.com/user/watchwtec/videos

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-s-technology-

empowerment-centre-w-tec/