

Trailblaz**HER**TM

Empowering Female Talent

Spotlight Role Model Campaign
2024



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TrailblazHER™ Spotlight Role Models Campaign

Rationale

The TrailblazHER™ Spotlight Role Model Campaign will showcase a diverse range of inspiring individuals across all sectors and at all stages of the career ladder.

Role models are a key approach to increasing the awareness of roles and rewards, unlocking previously unseen possibilities, particularly for young women. Role models can also provide unique perspectives and contributions to environments yet to benefit from their viewpoints, as well as supporting others to find and use their voice, and in doing so help others rise around them.

Research¹ demonstrates that role models have three core benefits for women in particular:

1. Role models represent and expand what is thought to be possible.
2. Role models can inspire individuals to be more ambitious.
3. Role models demonstrate mindsets and behaviours of how to strive, rise and thrive.

When considering the design of the Spotlight Role Model campaign, studies note that the psychological influence of role models is strengthened further when individuals are seen to:

1. Be succeeding on their own terms.
2. Have a willingness to take risks and 'fail' or be seen to fail.
3. Represent individuals not always within the higher echelons of career hierarchy.

In particular, the campaigns which show the most demonstrable impacts² are those that show success is personal. It does not always mean reaching the C-Suite. Not everyone aspires to or has the means to take up senior leadership positions. In fact, consistently showing role models that have reached these levels can have a counterproductive impact as they appear unattainable or too far ahead to be achievable. Relatability is therefore a key factor for success in such campaigns.

An additional challenge this campaign aims to overcome is that individuals may not see themselves as role models. One reason may be that they view themselves as far from the higher levels of power, influence and leadership. Yet, everyone has experiences that can be beneficial and enlightening for those coming up behind them. To empower individuals to recognise themselves as role models, TrailblazHER™ will be launching a series of informational digital campaigns, highlighting the impact of everyday people.

Finally, TrailblazHER™ understands the importance of effective communications and using the appropriate platform(s) for each target audience. Each tier of the campaign will employ different platforms to engage with the target audience(s) in an ethically conscious manner.

¹Morgenroth, Thekla, Michelle K. Ryan, and Kim Peters. "The motivational theory of role modeling: How role models influence role aspirants' goals." *Review of general psychology* 19, no. 4 (2015): 465-483.

² Seeing is Believing: Female Role Models Inspire Girls To Think Bigger. Maya Richard- Craven, Forbes, October 2020. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/margiewarrell/2020/10/09/seeing-is-believing-female-role-models-inspire-girls-to-rise/>

Objectives

The objectives of the Spotlight Role Model Campaign include:

- 1) Visual Representation: To showcase a truly diverse range of role models that can inspire women of all ages and backgrounds to reach for their goals.
- 2) Ideological Representation: To demonstrate that success does not have a single definition or time constraint.
- 3) Recognition of Diverse Success: To provide a platform to individuals to share their wisdom, experiences and insights and in doing so, recognise their success, contributions and perseverance.
- 4) Exposing Potential: To increase awareness about the ever-growing number of possibilities available.
- 5) Changing the Narrative: To reinforce the concepts that failure is part of succeeding and changing direction or moving beyond is always an option, no matter what circumstances may present otherwise.
- 6) Community Safety: To send a message that individuals are not alone. There is a community of people that understand them, welcome them and celebrate them, because they are just like them.

Campaign Design

Role Model Definition

A role model is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as “A person regarded by others as an example to be imitated”. At TrailblazHER™ we define a role model as someone who inspires, motivates and encourages others to succeed.

Everyone has a story that can inspire. For our TrailblazHER™ Spotlight Role Model Campaign we seek to include everyone from current scholars who have overcome challenges to succeed through their educational pathway, early career graduates who are now working in areas in which females are underrepresented, females who have blazed a trail and are now at an advanced stage of their careers, to allies who have worked hard to open pathways and supports for females across a broad range of sectors in which females are underrepresented. **The campaign is open to all genders and identities.**

Role Model Tiers

In order to serve the diverse TrailblazHER™ community, **four tiers of role models will be captured** over the course of the campaign:

- 1) Junior Role Models – Second level students.
- 2) Third Level Role Models – Third level students.
- 3) Early Career Professionals – Professionals with less than 10 years of experience.
- 4) Advanced Career Professionals – Professional with greater than 10 years of experience.

Individuals from each target group are being invited to register their interest to become a Spotlight Role Model. In order to ensure we are representative of our diverse community, **we especially welcome registrations from the following:**

- Individuals with less than ten years of work experience.
- Individuals who have returned to employment in the last 5 years.
- Individuals who have completed an apprenticeship.

- Individuals who are employed in a field, sector or organisation where women are currently and/or have conventionally been underrepresented.
- Individuals who have changed career pathways or sectors once or more.
- Individuals who have set-up their own business.
- Individuals who have entered their current employment field later in life (≥ 30 years of age).
- Individuals who have worked abroad or intend to work abroad in the next 2 years.
- Individuals who have moved to Ireland in the last 5 years.
- Individuals who identify as non-binary.
- Individuals who identify as having a non-white Irish ethnicity and/or identify as a member of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.
- Individuals who identify as a member of the Travelling Community, Refugee, Asylum Seeker and/or Immigrant communities.
- Individuals for whom English is not their first language.
- Individuals who identify as neurodivergent.
- Individuals with intellectual or learning disabilities.
- Individuals with non-physical and/or non-visible disabilities.
- Individuals with physical disabilities.
- Individuals with a life limiting condition.
- Individuals with dependents.
- Individuals who were raised by guardians who were not engaged in paid employment.
- Individuals who have overcome a significant failure, setback, or life-changing event.
- Individuals who are perceived to be acting in a way against the perceived conventional norms of their culture and/or family traditions.
- Individuals who were the first in their family to complete secondary, post-secondary or third-level education.
- Individuals who didn't attend or complete post-secondary or third level education.
- Individuals who attended education as a mature student (≥ 23 years of age).
- Individuals who have returned to education after a period of >10 years or more.

Campaign Features

Spotlight Interview

This is an interview-based campaign. Role Models will be invited to record an informal interview (maximum 20 minutes) in a setting in which they feel comfortable. The filming location will be confirmed with each participant to ensure all accommodation and scheduling requirements. Where possible, we invite participants to record their interviews in their workplace and/or additional locations, if permissions can be granted. Alternatively, filming locations on TU Dublin campuses or appropriate alternatives will be arranged.

The interview will cover four key subjects:

- (1) Your career path to date,
- (2) Reflections on your younger self and thoughts at that age,
- (3) Advice you would give to women considering your career path/sector and
- (4) Your thoughts on how we can help to advance gender equality.

All questions will be provided in advance for pre-clearance and a dedicated member of the TrailblazHER™ team will be on hand on the day to manage all queries and requests.

A Day in the Life Series

In tandem with the Spotlight Interviews, we invite Spotlight Role Models to participate in our 'A Day in the Life' series in which participants capture several images or short video clips throughout their working day which are then shared on TrailblazHER™'s social media platforms, with an additional opportunity to host a Q&A session on platforms such as TikTok. The purpose of this sister campaign is to provide further insights into the world of work beyond the classroom in a visually engaging way.

Elements of Participation

If selected for the live campaign, individual participation may include:

- (1) Attending a photo shoot and having your picture and video taken for the campaign.
- (2) Appearing in digital and print media campaigns including on-campus digital screens.
- (3) Being promoted as a TrailblazHER™ Role Model.
- (4) Providing profile information to enable content creation in line with the campaign's objectives.
- (5) Optional participation in the 'Day in the Life' series.

Platforms

TrailblazHER™ Spotlight Role Models will be featured across several digital platforms and print media to reach the diverse range of target demographic groups.

- TrailblazHER™ social media platforms – LinkedIn, Instagram, X, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube.
- TrailblazHER™ website.
- TU Dublin's website and socials media platforms.
- Digital installation across TU Dublin campuses.
- Partner websites and social media platforms.

In order to best serve these target groups, the platforms through which the specific demographic connects, as evidenced through published analytical profiles, will be employed for a tailored delivery model.

All campaign content will be subject to the expressed permission of individuals participating. Full details of all campaign elements will be provided in advance and participants can opt out at any stage.

Timeline and Time Commitment

TrailblazHER™ appreciates the busy schedule of professionals and has streamlined the process to ensure minimal time commitment. The entire process will take approximately one hour. In order to accommodate varying availability, participants will be able to book specific timeslots to capture their interview in-person or online. Outside of these sessions, we will work with each participant to schedule the most appropriate time for recording.

An example of a theoretical timeline is outlined below to give an overview of the expected time commitment.

Time Required	Location	Details
10 mins	Online form	Participants complete the registration form.
30 mins	In-person or online	Participants headshot and interview is captured.
10 mins	Email	Participants are provided with final proof of the feature for final approval.

Please note, it is intended that different cohorts will be filmed throughout the year to capture as diverse a range of role models as possible, to be released as part of our digital campaigns on campus and online. As such, not all those who kindly sign up this year may be invited to record their spotlight interview and/or be released this year but may be included in next year's cohort and so forth.

Steps to Participate

If you or your organisation would like to participate in the Spotlight Role Model Campaign, please register your interest using the [TrailblazHER™ Spotlight Role Model Registration Form](#).

If selected to be a Role Model the following steps will be completed:

- 1) A member of the TrailblazHER™ team will be in contact with you to provide your personalised brief, schedule your filming session and answer any questions you may have.
- 2) Your interview will be completed at a time and location which suits you.
- 3) You will be asked to confirm final pre-approval before release.
- 4) Your spotlight moment will be released.
- 5) Your feedback on your experience and any suggestions for improvement will be requested.

Campaign Feedback

We are committed to continuously improving our actions to ensure everyone feels they belong and are safe and comfortable to express themselves. All participants will be asked to provide feedback on their experience in order to continuously improve the campaign. If you have any suggestions on ways to improve any element of the campaign, we welcome your thoughts. Please contact TrailblazHER@TUDublin.ie.

Sources and Resources

Bettinger, E., & Long, B. T. (2005). Do Faculty Serve as Role Models? The Impact of Instructor and Professor Qualities and Student Achievement," *Review of Economics and Statis.*

Drury, B. J., Siy, J. O., & Cheryan, S. (2011). When do female role models benefit women? The importance of differentiating recruitment from retention in STEM. *Psychological Inquiry, 22(4)*, 265-269.

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Porter, C., & Serra, D. (2020). Gender differences in the choice of major: The importance of female role models. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 12(3)*, 226-254.

Quimby, J. L., & De Santis, A. M. (2006). The influence of role models on women's career choices. *The Career Development Quarterly, 54(4)*, 297-306.

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FAQs

Do Role Models receive financial compensation?

This is a voluntary campaign. We are incredibly grateful to all those who are part of the campaign for giving up their time.

What happens if I am no longer available/willing to participate?

If you wish to withdraw from the campaign at any time, please contact TrailblazHER@TUDublin.ie.

Is the campaign open to all genders?

Yes. Whilst the campaign's primary aim is to increase the visibility of females across a wide range of sectors, everyone is welcome to be part of the campaign, irrespective of how they identify.

If there is someone I know who wishes to participate how do they register their interest?

Please ask them to complete the [Registration Form](#).

On what platforms will the content be published?

The platforms on which the content will be published are dependent on the tier of role model. For example, early-career professional spotlights will be published across all platforms (TikTok, Instagram, LinkedIn etc.). Second and third level student spotlights may be shared exclusively on platforms whose user profiles comprise their peer groups e.g. TikTok.

Will we be informed before the campaign is published?

Yes, all role models will have access to approve the final version prior to publication.

I am a business owner or an employee of a business. Can I reference my company in the interview?

If you are the founder/owner of a company please feel free to include your company details in some capacity in the interview. If you are an employee of a company please ensure that all necessary approvals (in line with company bye-laws and regulations) are gained prior to including any reference to the company in the interview.

Who can we contact if we have any questions?

If you have any questions or would like to discuss anything further, please contact TrailblazHER@TUDublin.ie and a member of the TrailblazHER™ team will be in touch with you shortly.