

Microsoft teams up with diverse companies and organizations to launch the Women-Digital-Future initiative, empowering millions of women in China

Microsoft will partner with GSK, DDI, and Ladies Who Tech to focus on the growth and development of women in tech, helping them unleash their potential for innovation and fully embrace the digital future



Shanghai, January 14, 2021 -- Microsoft and the leadership consulting firm DDI have joined hands to officially launch the Women-Digital-Future initiative today. Microsoft announced that it will forge cooperation with a number of companies and organizations to empower women in multiple ways, with the aim of helping one million women in China improve their digital skills and embrace the digital future by the end of 2021. As representatives and ambassadors of the initiative's founding parties, Alain Crozier, Microsoft Corporate Vice President, Chairman, and CEO of Greater China Region, Cecilia Qi, GSK General Manager of China Pharmaceuticals & Vaccines, Stella Chang, DDI Senior Strategy Consultant of Greater China, Jill Tang, Co-founder of Ladies Who Tech, and Gebi Liang, General Manager of SharePoint & Teams China, attended the launch event.

The pandemic has accelerated digital transformation worldwide and online solutions and modes of work are becoming the norm. This creates urgency for companies and organizations to prioritize digital skills and tech-savvy talent. Today's professionals need to improve their digital competencies and prepare to continuously develop new skills and capabilities to adapt to



changing work environments for successful careers. For many women, this means not only upgrading their skills to better adapt to the digital transformation of their businesses, but also balancing multiple social roles to overcome challenges created by the pandemic. Given Microsoft's mission to "empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more," the company is committed to providing people from all walks of life with opportunities to build capabilities, increase their knowledge, and achieve professional success in the digital economy. In this environment, driving Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in corporate culture has never been more important.

Jean-Philippe Courtois, Executive Vice President and President, Microsoft Global Sales, Marketing and Operations said, "Allyship is essential to making Microsoft a diverse company with an inclusive culture. That's why we call on more allies to join this global discussion of how we can better support women in tech, and beyond, in light of the digital transformation we are experiencing. When we have a common understanding and expectations of each other, we can make a global change – this has never been truer or more important."

Alain Crozier, Microsoft Corporate Vice President, Chairman, and CEO of Greater China Region, said, "Microsoft has always actively championed diversity and inclusion internally, placing a high value on the development of our female employees and strongly promoting the power of women to drive the world forward. In the context of the new normal, Microsoft will continue to leverage its technology, resources, and platform advantages to work with more companies and organizations that share the same philosophy, helping empower women with digital skills and enabling them to embrace the digital age. At Microsoft, we consider this our duty and responsibility, and we shall continue to power forward in our mission."

Cecilia Qi, GSK General Manager of China Pharmaceuticals & Vaccines, said, "Digital transformation is both an opportunity and a challenge for women. This is especially the case in the new normal, which requires companies to provide women with more support to help them achieve better work-life balance and continue to attain success as they continue forward in their career. Success is gender-neutral, and I believe that, in the future, society will be more supportive and inclusive of women and empower them with more diverse and equal career opportunities."

Mindy Yeh, DDI Asia Vice President and Managing Director of Greater China, said, "DDI has always been focused on the advancement of female leadership. According to our global survey, there are nearly double the number of female leaders at the top 20% of financially performative enterprises than in the bottom 20%. Moreover, they boast notable advantages in terms of collaboration, synergy creation, and growth culture. In the future, organizations should leverage female leadership to accelerate change and transformation, while female professionals should continue to extend their influence and demonstrate their unique personal value."

Jill Tang, Co-founder of Ladies Who Tech, said, "We are excited to work with these leading industry representatives. We admire their efforts, and we believe that this is the start of a new era for female empowerment. In the future, we hope to inspire more enterprises to join us, to further



promote a culture of diversity and inclusion, as well as help more women to improve their digital skills and literacy, boosting the visibility and participation of women in innovation and technology.”

According to Microsoft's Global Diversity & Inclusion Report 2020 released last October, the number of female employees across Microsoft's core global businesses grew by 41% between 2016 to 2020. Meanwhile, the number of women holding tech positions at Microsoft has risen by 82.7% since 2016. This demonstrates the indispensable role that tech women are playing at Microsoft.

By bringing corporate leaders together in the Women·Digital·Future joint initiative, Microsoft and participating companies seek to empower women in this accelerated moment of digital transformation, so that they can not only leverage the power of technology to achieve their own dreams but drive incredible value and creativity for their industries and society as a whole, unleashing greater impact in the digital age. This series of initiatives will focus on four areas:

- **Thought Leadership & Insights:** Conduct a series of research projects to gain deeper insights into the current opportunities and challenges faced by female professionals in China's digital industry, in the aim to uncover more efficient solutions to help greater numbers of women progress in their careers.
- **Awareness & Inspiration:** Inspire and engage both women and men in embracing gender diversity and inclusion in the digital transformation era.
- **Digital Upskilling:** Develop and improve women's tech and digital skills through both online and offline skill-up programs.
- **Inclusive Leadership:** Educate and encourage more leaders to implement diversity and inclusion strategies in the workplace.

In the future, Microsoft will join hands with more companies and organizations to participate in the Women·Digital·Future initiative, to help and encourage more women to discover their potential, improve their digital skills, unleash their capacity for innovation, and fully embrace the digital future.

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