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Dear Lisa

Gender equality is sliding backwards according to the [World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2016](#) published last Wednesday. The report estimates that gender equality won't be achieved until the year 2186. The same report in 2014 estimated parity by 2095 meaning that in just two years, the forecast for global gender parity has been pushed back 91 years and is now 170 years away!

The report is an annual benchmarking exercise that measures progress towards parity between men and women in four areas: Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, Economic Opportunity and Political Empowerment. In this latest edition, the report finds that progress towards parity in the key economic pillar has slowed dramatically with the gap – which stands at 59% – now larger than at any point since 2008.

Behind this decline are a number of factors. One is salary, with women around the world on average earning just over half of what men earn despite, on average, working longer hours taking paid and unpaid work into account. Another persistent challenge is stagnant labourforce participation, with the global average for women standing at 54%, compared with 81% for men. The number of women in senior positions also remains stubbornly low, with only four countries in the world having equal numbers of male and female legislators, senior officials and managers, despite the fact that 95 countries now have as many – if not more – women educated at university level.

The slow rate of progress towards gender parity, especially in the economic realm, poses a particular risk given the fact that many jobs that employ a majority of women are likely to be hit hardest proportionately by impending technological disruption. This “hollowing out” of female livelihoods could deprive economies further of women's talents and increases the urgency for more women to enter high-growth fields such as those demanding STEM skills.

The best performers overall were Iceland, Finland, and Norway, although Rwanda (fifth) and Nicaragua (10th) showed that developing economies can also outperform in female empowerment. For East Asia and the Pacific region however, the gap stood at 68%, with a large distance between more gender-equal societies such as the Philippines (7th) and New Zealand (9th) and its laggards, including economic heavyweights China (99th), Japan (111th) and South Korea (116th). The sluggish pace of change in these larger nations in part explains why current projections suggest the region will not close its economic gap for another 111 years.

The WEF pointed to a “range of evidence to suggest that women's political leadership and wider economic participation are correlated.” Female talent remains “one of the most underutilised business resources, either squandered through lack of progression or untapped from the outset,” a particular waste given that companies with senior female executive leadership are estimated to outperform on measures such as return on equity. The Philippines leads the way in promoting women to senior executive posts, ranking fourth in an ILO survey with women accounting for 48% of all managers. China ranked 85th with 17% while Japan and South Korea came in at 96th and 97th respectively due to barriers such as “housework, male-oriented corporate cultures, and a lack of female role models”.

For Asia, the economic imperative of closing the gender gap is shown by estimates that it could add US\$526 billion to Japan's GDP while China could see a US\$2.5 trillion GDP increase by 2020.

As the report notes, “These forecasts are not foregone conclusions. Instead, they reflect the current state of progress and serve as a call to action to policy-makers and other stakeholders to double down on efforts to accelerate gender equality”. The pressure is on for all of us to do more!

Warm regards

Su-Mei Thompson  
 CEO, The Women's Foundation

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**2016 GALA DINNER**  
**TUESDAY**  
**NOVEMBER 15**

TICKETS NOW SELLING

### TWF Gala Dinner 2016 - Reserve Your Table Now!

Tables are now selling fast for TWF's 2016 Gala Dinner sponsored by Bloomberg! We are delighted to have Sabrina Peng, Vice President of Ant Financial Services Group and Partner of Alibaba Group, as our keynote speaker this year. Other guest speakers include Erika Irish Brown, Global Head of Diversity & Inclusion at Bloomberg, and Shiza Shahid, Co-Founder of the Malala Fund. In keeping with the theme of celebrating women

in tech, we will also share video remarks from global tech icons including Sheryl Sandberg - COO of Facebook, Ruth Porat - CFO of Google (now Alphabet) and Jean Liu - President of Didi Chuxing, to celebrate women in tech, and we are delighted to have Facebook as our Social Media Partner. We are also looking for more event sponsors and auction prize donors - to find out more, please contact Claire Lim at [claire.lim@twfhk.org](mailto:claire.lim@twfhk.org).

**DATE:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016

**TIME:** From 7.00 p.m.

**VENUE:** JW Marriott Hotel, One Pacific Place, 88 Queensway

**REGISTER** [here](#) to join.



### **TWF/Bloomberg Leading Women in FinTech Panel & Networking Lunch**

TWF and Bloomberg are delighted to present Leading Women in FinTech featuring confirmed panellists: Renu Bhatia / SuperCharger, Melissa Guzy / Arbor Ventures, Bénédicte N. Nolens / SFC and Janet Yuen / HSBC. The event will be moderated by Lu Lu Chen / Bloomberg.

**DATE:** Thursday, November 17, 2016

**TIME:** 12.15 - 2.00 p.m.

**VENUE:** Bloomberg Auditorium, 27/F, Cheung Kong Center, 2 Queen's Road Central

**REGISTER** [here](#)

## TWF PROGRAMME UPDATES



### **Mentoring Programme 2016-2017**

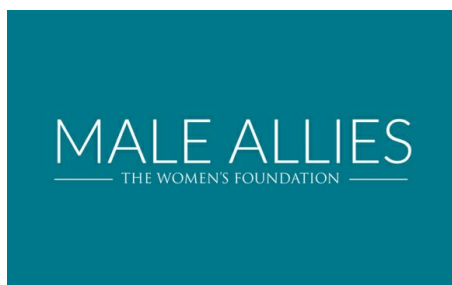
This year saw unprecedented levels of interest in the Mentoring Programme with a record-breaking 700 women attending the info sessions and over 350 applicants. In October, we conducted 180 interviews and will announce the 110 participants for the 2016-2017 cycle tomorrow. Thank you to everyone who applied and congratulations to our new mentors and protégés!



### **T.E.E.N. Alumni**

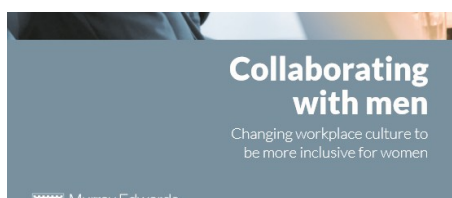
A number of our T.E.E.N. Alumni attended the HKGNA/Festive Korea 2016 Gala Concert last Sunday. Many thanks to "Just The Ticket" for providing our TEENs with this enriching experience.

## EVENTS



### **New Male Allies & Edelman Workshop**

A warm welcome to our newest Male Allies members: Stuart Harrison - CEO at AXA, Peter Mathieson - HKU President and Clifford Hart Jr - former US Consul General to Hong Kong & Macau. After a half-year pilot, several of our Male Allies will be participating in a workshop next week led by Edelman to flesh out the official mission, goals and priorities for the initiative. Stay tuned!



### **Collaborating with Men: a new report by Murray Edwards College**

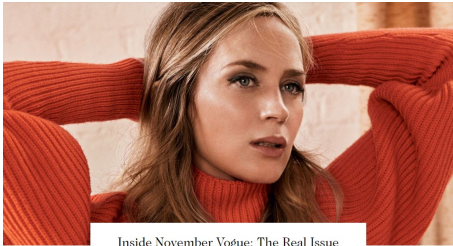
Congratulations to Murray Edwards College, Cambridge on their excellent new study: [Collaborating with Men](#). The report's key insight is that committing to gender equality means men actively working to change workplace culture. Building understanding,

## SHE OBJECTS UPDATE



### Community Screenings

Last week saw four community screenings of She Objects take place at UBS, Island ECC Church, Standard Chartered and Credit Suisse. We will also be screening She Objects tomorrow night at creative coworking space at Hive Studios - spaces are still available: if you would like to join, please reserve a seat [here](#). To arrange a screening for your company, women's network, school or university, please email [Sarah.AbbottLadner@twfhk.org](mailto:Sarah.AbbottLadner@twfhk.org).



Inside November Vogue: The Real Issue

### British Vogue "Real" Women November Issue

This month's issue of British Vogue is a model-free zone and features "real" women including CEOs, entrepreneurs and academics. Many commentators welcomed the move as a positive step in changing the fashion industry's approach to body image. Some have questioned though whether a one-off edition can make a difference and others have suggested that Vogue is a magazine that's about fantasy anyway - as editor, Alexandra Shulman, said in a 2014 interview, "people don't buy Vogue to see what they see when they look in a mirror. They can do that for free". As always, we would love to hear your views!

## TWF IN THE SPOTLIGHT



SU-MEI THOMPSON  
THE WOMEN'S FOUNDATION CEO

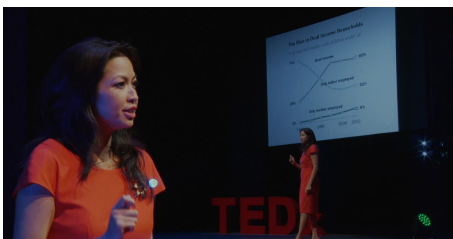
### Reuters TV: Trump Campaign Shocks Women in Asia

TWF CEO, Su-Mei Thompson was featured by [Thomson Reuters TV](#), on the tenor of the US election and the focus on harassment against women. "If the spotlight on sexism and harassment in the run up to the US election encourages other countries to reflect on how women are treated and talked about in their own culture and society, if it makes chief executives in this part of the world reflect on whether there are things that are happening or are being said in their organisations which make women feel self-conscious, uncomfortable or ashamed, if it makes businesses think twice about how they are portraying women in their ad campaigns, then that is all to the good".



### Rita Ching on RTHK 2

Last Thursday, TWF Deputy CEO Rita Ching was invited by the EOC to join RTHK Radio 2's "[Made in Hong Kong](#)" programme promoting equal opportunities and diversity. Rita introduced TWF's mission and initiatives to challenge gender stereotypes including TWF's "She Objects" campaign and related Media Literacy Programme, as well as our T.E.E.N. Programme.



### Claire Lim at TEDxWanChai

TWF Development Director Claire Lim delivered a powerful speech at the TEDxWanchai 2016: Crossroads conference last Saturday before a full-house auditorium at the HKAPA. Claire spoke on "how come there are so many tiger moms but so few tiger women?".

## IN THE COMMUNITY



Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development

### TWF to address regional female ministers and MPs

TWF CEO, Su-Mei Thompson, has been invited to attend this weekend's [11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference](#) organised by the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) in collaboration with the National Legislative Assembly of Thailand. Su-Mei will be speaking as part of a panel looking at why the gender gap in economic participation remains pervasive and unresolved worldwide and particularly in Asia and the Pacific.



### AmCham's 13th Annual Women of Influence Conference

TWF is proud to be supporting [AmCham's Women of Influence Conference](#) once again this year. The culmination of the conference will be the presentation of the 13th Annual Women of Influence Awards which will recognise seven high-achieving women, a male champion who has demonstrated his support for the advancement of women and one outstanding company for women.

**DATE:** Friday, November 11, 2016

**TIME:** 8.00 a.m. - 2.30 p.m.

**VENUE:** Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong

**REGISTER** [here](#) to join the conference



### Magos Herrera: A Jazz concert in support of HeForShe

TWF is proud to support Magos Herrera's concert on November 20 in aid of UN Women's HeForShe. Click [here](#) to book your tickets now!



### TWF Panel at the HKIHRM Conference

TWF will share best practices for developing the female talent pipeline at the 2016 HKIHRM Annual Conference on November 25. Panellists include TWF HR Advisory Council Chair - Zoe Henham, Kimberley Cole/Thomson Reuters, Selina Ko/Manulife, Margaret Lyng/BAML and Jo Hayes/TWF. For more information, please click [here](#).

## TWF FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES - We Would Love Your Support!



### TWF Mischa Pins

To raise funds for our programmes, TWF is selling pins, specially designed for TWF by Michelle Lai - MISCHA founder. The beautiful black and gold enamelled pins featuring MISCHA's signature design can be purchased at TWF and partner events for HK\$50. We are looking for volunteers to help us with selling pins within their organisations and networks. Please contact Stephanie Ko at [stephanie.ko@twfhk.org](mailto:stephanie.ko@twfhk.org) to find out more.

## WHAT WE'RE READING

**Our top picks for recommended reading and listening on the key trends and breaking stories about women and gender:**

- [China Has World's Most Skewed Sex Ratio At Birth – Again](#) (SCMP)
- [Even in Entrepreneurship, Women Face Gender Constraints](#) (Bloomberg)
- [When A Company Is Failing, Female CEOs Get Blamed More Frequently Than Men](#) (Huffington Post)
- [Women Doing Their Makeup On The Train Are 'Ugly,' Says Japanese Commercial](#) (Washington Post)
- [Everyday Sexism: Girls' And Young Women's Views On Gender Inequality In Australia](#) (Our Watch)
- [Childcare Centre For Airport Staff Lauded By Minister, But Critic Says Other Hong Kong Public Organisations Not Doing Enough](#) (SCMP)

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