



The Athena SWAN (Scientific Women's Academic Network) Charter was established in 2005 with the aim of *"Encouraging and recognising commitment to advancing gender equality"* within STEM subjects, i.e., science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The Athena SWAN agenda has grown overtime to promote equality in general. Scan the QR code opposite for more background about Athena SWAN at Heriot-Watt, including guidance and resources.



1. The Piscopia Initiative



Fig 1: Kaytlin Louth (left) and Anastasia Istratuca (right) receiving the Equate Scotland prize

The Piscopia Initiative is an international society providing women and underrepresented genders in the mathematical sciences with: a space for undergraduates to ask about PhD life, a community in which researchers can share their experiences, and a platform to highlight role models across career stages. It was founded right here in Edinburgh in 2019, and since then we have expanded to over 20 local committees with over 1,300 followers across LinkedIn, Instagram and X. We were also celebrated as Equate Scotland's Student Society of the Year earlier this year.

Piscopia was founded to address the gender gap of women and underrepresented genders in postgraduate mathematical research in the UK. Only 26% of doctorate mathematical sciences graduates are female, and this falls further to 11% of mathematical sciences professors [1]. We aim to bridge this gap by encouraging students to pursue PhDs and fostering a community to support early career mathematicians, showing them that they could belong in academia.

[1] <https://www.lms.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/Benchmarking%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>





We have a local committee in Edinburgh, jointly run across Heriot-Watt and University of Edinburgh. We are starting back up our Good Morning Monday's breakfast club held once a month at The Bayes Centre, and soon to be hosting a PhD information session for anyone considering PhD study. To find out about local events such as these, please join our Teams Channel. If you have any problems joining or want to contact us for any other reason, please email piscopia.edinburgh@gmail.com. In the past, we have also held fun social events such as movie and board games nights, candle painting, and creating signs for the International Women's Day march.

[Piscopia Initiative Edinburgh](#) | [General](#) | [Microsoft Teams](#)

You can also join the wider Piscopia Initiative mailing list to find out about great opportunities for underrepresented genders in maths to find out about PhD study, be involved with conferences, and other research and internship opportunities. We also share information here about our monthly seminar series PiWORKS which showcases an academic's journey to research and celebrates the achievements of women and underrepresented genders in maths. <https://forms.gle/TBjPRT1Ty7RACtUo9>



Fig 2: Candle painting last Christmas at the Maxwell Institute



Fig 3: Panel discussion Piscopia organised at the Equate Scotland event





2. Women@CS – a Visit to Edinburgh Zoo!

This year, **Women@CS** is all about building a stronger, more connected, and fun community among the women in computer science. Our vision is to create an environment where women across all year groups can come together, support one another, and make lasting connections. One way we will do this, is by hosting events and fundraisers, so others can see the lasting impact we can make as a community in **Women@CS**.

For example, over consolidation week we had a fantastic opportunity to go to the zoo! During this trip, the women in CS at Heriot-Watt bonded over seeing the animals and enjoyed some delicious ice cream and hot chocolate. This was a great opportunity to meet like-minded women from all years of Computer Science in Heriot-Watt.



We're looking forward to more fun events, and we'd love for you to join us! To get involved, simply email us at:

- cm2165@hw.ac.uk or
- po2010@hw.ac.uk or
- add us on Instagram [@womeninacs.hw](https://www.instagram.com/womeninacs.hw)

Women@CS





3. Celebrating Ada Lovelace Day in Dubai!



MACS Dubai Ada Lovelace Day took place on Thursday the 3rd of October. Students and staff were honoured to have Alumni and current Computer Science students who stepped into the spotlight and shared their passion, projects, and career using the PechaKucha presentation style. Each presenter showed 20 slides, each for 20 seconds of their achievements as a computing student at Heriot-Watt.

A big thank you to our presenters:

Syed Ammar, Oluwadolabomi Muraino, Rachael Teresa Dias, Furqan Muhammad and Ramaprasad Chandrashekhar for their time and wonderful presentations!

The event was organised by:

Drishty Sobnath.





4. Celebrating Ada Lovelace Day in Edinburgh!



The **MACS Ada Lovelace Day Celebration** for students in Edinburgh took place on Tuesday 8 October. The venue was the atrium of the National Robotarium (above). In her welcome to the event, our Executive Dean Sara Lombardo highlighted “The Thrilling Adventures of Lovelace and Babbage” by Sydney Padua (see **item 6** below) – a graphic novel intertwined with historical detail that won Sydney the **Neumann Prize in the History of Mathematics**. The main event took the form of two robot demos. First, Marta Romeo (below middle) demonstrated the complementary power of conversational agents and large language models (LLM) using Furhat (below left). Second, Alistair McConnell demonstrated the agility and resilience of the Spot Robot Dog (below right).





5. Nominations for Honorary Degrees: Have your say

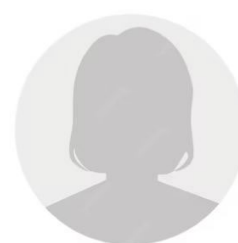
The award recognizes academic as well as wider societal contributions. Part of our MACS Athena SWAN Action Plan is to increase the number of MACS female honorary graduates. Anyone can propose an individual for an honorary degree; simply complete the nomination form on the University web page – see QR Code opposite.



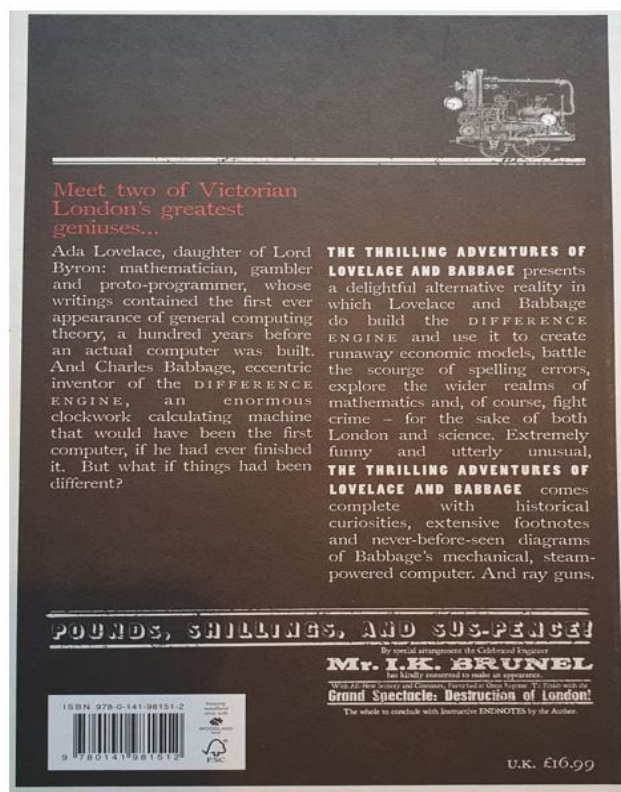
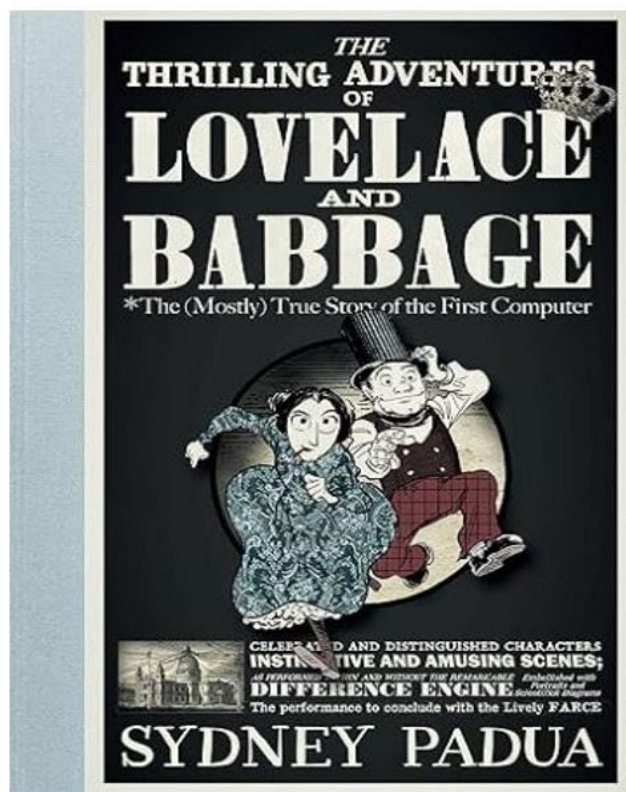
Professor Maria J. Esteban
Honorary Doctorate of Science
Graduation Ceremony: June 2019



Dr Chehrzad Shakiban
Honorary Doctorate of Science
Graduation Ceremony: June 2024



6. A Recommendation for a Good Read





7. Looking to fund a STEM related event or activity?

The **HWU STEM Inclusivity Network (IN)** have been allocated funds from the Mary Burton Project as part of the University's 1821 Appeal. These funds are available for groups and societies (students and staff) at HWU to deliver activities for women in STEM. Please submit your request for funds through the **Form** linked to the **QR code** below. All requests submitted will be considered on a rolling basis.



QR code for Form



QR code for STEM IN

Please note the following conditions:

- You must be applying from a society, group, project or initiative with a primary focus on supporting women in STEM.
- Possible use of funds include event catering, speaker fees, and relevant training and development. Funds may not be used for staff time.
- A maximum of £500 may be requested by a single group, per academic year.
- To report to the fund's Governance Group, we are required to report on impact, including number of beneficiaries reached, gender of beneficiaries, number of students from widening access background, etc. You will be expected to share these details after your activity is complete, along with photos if possible.
- We will inform you of the final decision on your application within approximately five weeks.


If you have any questions, contact STEMinclusivity@hw.ac.uk

If you have suggestions or questions related to Athena SWAN, or an event that you would like to advertise, then please send them to us via athena-macs@hw.ac.uk. In addition, if you would like to be part of the new **MACS Equality Diversity and Inclusion Team (EDIT)** then please do get in touch.



Audrey Repetti and Andrew Ireland
(MACS Athena Swan Coordinators)







QUIZ & NETWORK

Goodie Bags for the winners!

Wednesday, 6th November
1:00 - 2:00 PM
At the Multiplex, Robotarium




Come along for an insightful talk on time management and test your knowledge with a fun quiz on STEM in Scotland.



PIZZA PROVIDED!

Presented by your Equate Champions!



REGISTER HERE!

