



## Young Women Into Leadership (You WIL) Summit 2026

Online event: 20th July to 27th July 2026

*'I feel truly privileged to be a part of the You WIL Summit, as it has left a lasting positive impact on me. It has strengthened my self-belief, boosted my confidence, and motivated me to dream bigger. The inspiring sessions have encouraged me to embrace my passion for painting and sketching as a serious career path.'*

*[Anonymous Participant 2025]*



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### What is You WIL?

You WIL (Young Women into Leadership) is a six-day online summit for girls aged 14-16, designed to inspire and equip the next generation of young women leaders. The programme builds confidence, leadership skills, and a global outlook, empowering participants to recognise their potential and shape their futures.

Organised by Birmingham City Council and delivered in partnership with the University of Birmingham, You WIL reflects a shared commitment to social mobility, inclusion, and opportunity.

The summit brings together young women from Birmingham and its sister cities around the world, particularly those who may have had fewer opportunities to access leadership development and international exposure. By fostering meaningful connections, role models, and youth empowerment, You WIL supports emerging changemakers in imagining ambitious futures and taking their first steps toward leadership.

Find out more about the 2025 programme:



For enquiries, please contact:  
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### What to expect in 2026

Over the first 5 days of the summit, participants will join 2-hour interactive online sessions, each focused on an exciting theme:

- **DAY 1 - Leading for Change: Women in Politics, Public Service and Humanitarian Work**
- **DAY 2 - Future Founders: Women Leading in Business & Entrepreneurship**
- **DAY 3 - The Power of Women in Sport and Wellbeing**
- **DAY 4 - Innovators of tomorrow: Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths**
- **DAY 5 - Women Shaping the Arts, Culture, Media & the Creative Industries**

Each session features inspiring female leaders who will share their stories, career journeys, and tips for overcoming challenges. You'll have the chance to ask questions, receive mentoring, and learn directly from those shaping the world today.

Throughout the week, you'll work in small international teams to create a presentation on one of the themes. **With support and guidance from mentors at the University of Birmingham, you'll refine your ideas and showcase your team's work during a live online presentation on the 6<sup>th</sup> day.**

This year, the summit runs from **Monday, 20th July, to Monday, 27th July (excluding the weekend)** – an incredible week to connect, create, and kickstart your journey as a young leader!

## By participating in You WIL, you will

- **Develop your leadership skills** – build confidence, resilience, and independence.
- **Practise transferable skills** – improve public speaking, teamwork, and goal setting through mentorship and group presentation.
- **Meet inspiring role models** – connect with female leaders from a variety of backgrounds and hear their stories.
- **Work in international teams** – share ideas, learn from different cultures, and broaden your horizons.
- **Make meaningful connections** – build friendships and networks that last beyond the summit.

This bespoke programme combines **interactive sessions, mentorship, and teamwork** to help you grow as a confident young leader ready to make a positive impact.

## Feedback From Previous Student Participants

*“The You WIL Summit has honestly changed the way I see myself and my future. Listening to so many women from different paths, whether in politics, STEM, business, or the arts have made me realise that there’s no single way to succeed or lead.”*

[Anonymous Participant 2025]

*“It has given me more confidence into finding a field to go into, and I feel like it has opened up more career opportunities I may not have considered earlier such as the culture and media industry. I have also learnt skills of leadership and organising a team, as well as understanding and empathy when working in multicultural groups.”*

[Anonymous Participant 2024]

*"After this week I feel more confident as a person but also as a woman. Listening to all these incredible speakers telling us their stories and how they overcome all this difficulties and stereotypes really inspired me. I have learned that things that looked like barriers before such as age, gender, ethnicity etc cannot stop me from reaching my goals and dreams for the future."*

[Anonymous Participant 2023]

## Inspiring Voices from previous years

**Chancellor Sandie Okoro OBE** – the first female Chancellor of the University of Birmingham, a pre-eminent lawyer and champion of equality rights, the inaugural Chair of the Women of the World (WOW) Foundation, Senior Vice-President and General Counsel at the World Bank Group.

**Prof Helen Pankhurst** – Activist and Academic, CARE International, Centenary Action Group and great granddaughter of Emmeline Pankhurst leader of the British Suffragette movement.

**Simone Magill** – Footballer for Birmingham City F.C. and Captain of the Northern Irish Women’s Football Team.

**Hannah England** – Athletics World Championship medallist, Sports Broadcaster, co-founder of Birmingham Athletics Academy.

**Di Xiao** – Concert pianist named amongst the 10 most outstanding Chinese concert pianists and champion of female composers.

