

# THE WOMEN'S SPORT TRUST UNLOCKED PROGRAMME

A powerful community helping female athletes find their voice, shape their future, and make an impact where it matters most.



## OUR VISION

**A WORLD WHERE WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL SPORT IS  
VALUED, INDEPENDENTLY SUCCESSFUL AND DRIVING  
POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE**





Charity Number 1153429



Women's Sport Trust (WST) is a pioneering and visionary charity which has been at the forefront of driving change within women's professional sport in the UK for more than a decade.

## OUR MISSION



Build a self-sustaining sports industry in the UK that values women and girls through fair investment, opportunities, and visibility



Inspire future generations with strong, diverse female role models in sport



Leverage sport to promote societal change and achieve equity for all

## OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Grow media coverage and visibility

Improve representation in sponsorship and advertising

Transform public perception and support

Drive systemic sustainability for the industry as a whole



# WHAT IS UNLOCKED?

A community of elite female athletes, focused on helping them identify their unique voices, plan for their futures, and leverage their influence to drive positive change in sport and beyond.



## A Supportive and Influential Community

A strong network where female athletes feel supported, connected, and empowered to drive change collectively.



## Athletes Equipped for Future Success

Help elite female athletes articulate their identities, amplify their voices, and make informed decisions about their careers and long-term impact.



## Driving Awareness and Advocacy

Engage influential decision-makers across sport, media, and business to better understand the challenges female athletes face, champion opportunities, and actively support women's sport.





# BREAKING IT DOWN



Unlocked is a combination of:

- **Community** – building a new network of other elite athletes who face similar challenges and opportunities. To create the ultimate girl squad for support and inspiration
- **Hangouts** – a chance to catch-up with the WST team and the other athletes. Hear each other's stories, learn from sport industry insiders in our 'spotlight sessions' and discuss relevant topics in breakout groups – sharing knowledge and ideas
- **Learning** – through webinars provided by the best experts in the business; create a website, understand how to gain sponsorship, find out more about the media, fast-track your social channels or hear from lawyers on your signing contracts and starting organisations
- **Connections** – we will connect you with an 'activator', a leader from business, media or sport who will help you understand your mission and help make it happen
- **Visibility** – we will provide opportunities to increase your visibility through media opportunities, developing content, speaking engagements and social media





# UNLOCKED 2025

**In 2025 we will recruit 35 elite female athletes**

Our Unlocked athletes will be a diverse group of women from across the sporting landscape. We are aiming for representation of:

- Sports (team/individual, traditional/emerging, Olympic/Non-Olympic, winter/summer)
- Age, ethnicity, athletes, para-athletes, location of athletes (must be UK-relevant)
- Aspiring/competing/retired athletes (national and/or international level)

**Crucially, they will share an ambition to have impact on the issues that matter to them**





# PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

NOV 2025 - NOV 2026



**LAUNCH  
EVENT**

*Nov 2025*

**ONLINE  
HANGOUTS &  
WEBINARS**

**ATHLETE X  
ACTIVATOR  
MATCHING**

*Feb 2026*

**ACTIVATOR 1:1  
& REDUCED  
HANGOUTS**

**END  
CELEBRATION**

*Nov 2026*



Athlete hangouts, spotlight sessions and webinars



Launchpad - activator 121 sessions



Media and speaking opportunities



# 2025 PROGRAMME DETAIL

**1**

## LAUNCH & KICK-OFF

We'll start with an in-person event in November – your chance to meet the WST team, connect with industry stakeholders, and get to know the other athletes who'll be part of your journey.

**2**

## THE JOURNEY

The programme runs from November 2025 to November 2026. Across the year, you'll join online hangouts, expert-led webinars and practical workshops. We'll keep timings flexible (lunchtime, evenings, weekends) to make sure they work around training, competition and work commitments.

**3**

## WHAT MAKES IT SPECIAL

The heart of Unlocked is you - a community of athletes coming together to share experiences and support each other. Along the way, you'll also hear from experts at organisations like YouTube, TikTok, BBC Sport, Squire Patton Boggs (law firm) and more. And work 1-to-1 with an activator (a leader from business, sport or media) to support you in moving forward with what's most important to you.



# CONFIRMED DATES

We have some confirmed dates and structure but most will be arranged once we've met the group and understood everyone's schedules.

Confirmed dates:

- Launch event (in person) – November 2025
- Activator matching event (in-person) – February 2026
- Ending Celebration event - November 2026

# OUR EXPECTATIONS OF YOU

- Attend a minimum of 50% of the Unlocked hangouts
- Attend a minimum of 50% of the webinars
- Full engagement with your activator (if you choose to have one) e.g. attend a minimum of three 1:1 sessions, arranged at mutually convenient times.

TIME TO

UNLOCK





# HOW TO APPLY

- Please click [here](#) to fill out our application form. It asks for some basic information about you.
- At the end of the form, you will be asked to upload either a word document (max. 2 pages) or a video (max. 3 mins) letting us know:
  1. A bit about yourself and your sport
  2. Why you would like to be part of Unlocked
  3. One issue in women's sport that you are interested in and why
- Once we receive your application, we may arrange a short informal telephone call. If you have any further questions, contact Eilidh on [eilidhgibson@womenssporttrust.com](mailto:eilidhgibson@womenssporttrust.com).

All applications must be received by **5pm Wednesday 8th October 2025.**





# 111 UNLOCKED ALUMNI





# ATHLETE ALUMNI

## BACKGROUND

- In 2020 we launched our first Unlocked programme, with 41 athletes from 24 different sports
- Together the group became a vibrant community, supporting each other, sharing ideas and experiences and tackling significant issues
- The programme received significant media coverage, and our athletes were able to tell their stories to a wide audience
- Three cohorts later (2020, 2021, 2022), we now have 111 incredible athletes in our alumni group. They continue to support one another and make a difference in the areas that they are passionate about.
- It's time to expand that group and run another Unlocked programme this year.

## THE STATS

- It was important to us that Unlocked made a tangible difference for our athletes, so we conducted research at the start, middle and end of the programme
- Athletes scored themselves on areas including; understanding influence, profile, career navigation, managing commercial opportunities and being prepared for transition
- Across each area every athlete scored a marked increase. 92% increased their overall confidence, this was clear to see as the group grew in strength and we saw the real outcomes of Unlocked.
- Our athletes secured sponsorship, took on media opportunities, championed diversity in their sport and created ways to inspire and reach out to women & girls.
- Each athlete receives approximately 40 hours of high-quality learning and engagement through the WST team, the activator relationship and formal learning.



# UNLOCKED ATHLETE SUCCESS STORIES



**ALICE DEARING** SWIMMING

UNLOCKED 1

During her time on Unlocked, Alice co-founded the Black Swimming Association. Since then, Alice has become a key voice in advocating for diversity in sport, particularly swimming. She has, amongst many other things, won a Changemaker award at SWOTY, been appointed to the Sport England Talent and Inclusion Advisory Group, and joined the WST board apprentice scheme.



**MONTPELL DOUGLAS** BOBSLEIGH

UNLOCKED 2

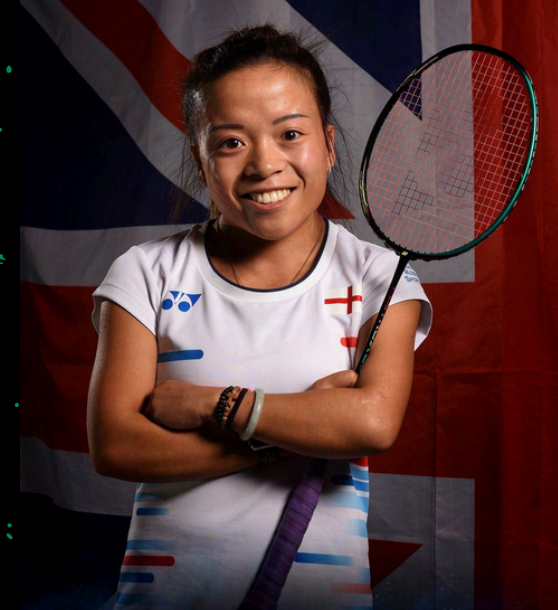
Montell is a GB Bobsleigh athlete and Summer Olympian. Montell is passionate about mentoring young people and inspiring others to develop self-empowerment. During her time on Unlocked, Montell was selected as the voice of Bobsleigh athletes in the lead up to Beijing 2022. She also became a BBC Sport columnist. In 2024, Montell became a Gladiator in the HIT BBC One show. Her gladiator persona is "Fire".



**AMBER KEEGAN** SWIMMING

UNLOCKED 2

During her time on Unlocked, Amber was offered a 3 month Fellowship in Parliament. Amber also co-founded 'Athlete Interactions' with fellow Unlocked athletes. Now a registered charity, Athlete Interactions works to decrease the stigma around mental health in elite sport by, amongst other things, providing an athlete support service.



**RACH CHOONG** PARA-BADMINTON

UNLOCKED 1

With support from Unlocked activators, Rach landed a commentary role at the Paralympic Games in Tokyo 2021. She is an Ambassador for the Asian Sports Foundation, Sporting Equals and Fundacja Bartłomieja Mroza (Poland). Rach works to positively impact participation levels of girls and young women in sport, to champion Para Badminton and to promote racial equality so people from all ethnic backgrounds feel that they can comfortably and safely participate in sport.



**ZAINAB ALEMA** RUGBY

UNLOCKED 3

Zainab has been playing rugby for over 10 years and works to get more Muslim women and ethnic minorities into rugby. She works on projects such as @muslimahrugby and @studsinthemud. Zainab won The Sunday Times' Vitality Grassroots Sportswoman of the Year award in 2020. Following encouragement from her Unlocked Activator Clare Balding, Zainab applied for and won the Woman of the Future Awards in 2022.



**TASHA JONES MBE** BOXING

UNLOCKED 1

Just after Unlocked, Tasha got a new boxing column in the Metro. She also hosted England Boxing's first ever Women in Boxing conference in December 2021. It was a first as part of an equality, diversity and inclusion series that was staged over a 12 month period. Tasha was named the British Boxing Board of Control's British Boxer of the Year for 2022, becoming the first woman to win the accolade. In 2023, Tasha became the first black woman to receive a manager's license from the British Boxing Board of Control.



# ATHLETE FEEDBACK FROM UNLOCKED



“The WST Unlocked programme has given me a network for the rest of my career and the rest of my life. The opportunities that I feel I can now expose myself to in sport all because of the Unlocked programme are endless.”

“You have been so kind and reassuring on so many levels and have honestly made my transition into working on Project red-s so much less lonely”

“Unlocked is undoubtedly an exceptional group of women who I truly believe will impact the sporting landscape for the better. The hangouts that I attended were empowering and inspiring me to be brave in the face of adversity and inequality. That might not mean a lot but these barriers I face daily in my new role, and ones I feel I am much more confident to push back on since starting Unlocked. So thank you for introducing me to such a bad ass group of women.”

“Knowing that we have access to such knowledgeable and supportive individuals really allows for me to strive for things I never thought possible.”

“It’s helped me to set my sights on bigger goals, get over a bit of imposter syndrome, feel more confident in myself and want to have more of a voice and speak out for things I believe in.”



## Unlocked: 35 female sports stars join charity programme to increase diversity in sport

7 April 2021 | Sport |



**yahoo!finance**

 Search for news, symbols or companiesSPORTS **BEAT** | Sportsbeat

## Trailblazer Nabila Tejpar on her motorsport roots and the need for increased diversity

**THE HOCKEY PAPER**  
READ YOUR GAME

## Great Britain hockey duo aim to highlight lack of diversity



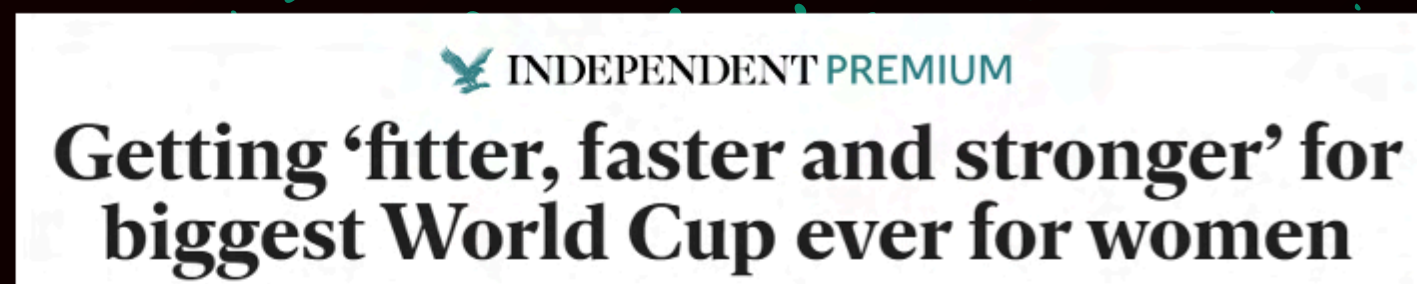
## Unlocked: Top sportswomen join Women's Sport Trust drive for increased diversity

# AMPLIFYING ATHLETE VOICES

**Unlocked: Women's Sport Trust initiative will see 35 elite female athletes come together to tackle diversity in sport head on**



## “Unlocked”: 35 top players per la diversità nello sport





## Women's Sport Trust launches 'unlocked' campaign to push for 'greater ambition' in 2020s

16 January 2020 | Sport



Some of the British athletes who will be taking part in the initiative

The profile of women's sport has grown hugely over the last decade but a leading charity believes there needs to be much greater ambition.

The Women's Sport Trust has launched a campaign called 'unlocked' which will elite athletes from 24 sports with leading figures from business, sport and the media.

Sportswomen on the programme include Rio Olympic hockey gold medalist Hinch, England and Manchester City goalkeeper Karen Bardsley, England netballer Sasha Corbin and racing driver Alice Powell.

Tammy Parlor, of the Women's Sport Trust, said there were still too many closed doors in the sports industry which has meant progress has been uneven, with peaks and troughs of attention and investment.

She said: "Despite increasing profile, we believe the value of women's sport is not unlocked faster, with more impatience and greater ambition."

The athlete launch was hosted at the BBC Sport headquarters in Salford and the campaign's aim is to create critical mass of noise and energy to propel women's sport in the 2020s.

Boxer Stacey Copeland said: "Most female athletes are not only concerned about their own sporting ambition but about what impact we can have as role-models on the future of women's sport."

"I want to see more women and girls in non-traditional sports like boxing and created my own project 'Pave the Way' to do this."



## MarketingWeek

## Top marketers pledge to take women's sport to the 'next level'

The Women's Sport Trust is pairing marketers from Sainsbury's, Disney and Facebook with female athletes in a bid to amplify the message around women's sport.

The Women's Sport Trust: we're keeping athletes from the sidelines, and brands can too

By Rebecca Stewart - 14 July 2020 08:00am

Twitter Facebook LinkedIn YouTube Instagram

Emily Davidson, hockey player for Team England and Team GB says the support of WST has been 'life-changing'

'We must not let the narrative turn negative' — listening in on the Women's Sports Trust

Female athletes explain that they do not want fears about the demise of women's sport to become self-fulfilling

By Molly McIlwain - 12 Nov 2018 - 10:00pm

Boxing Champion Stacey Copeland Hails Innovative Initiative To Increase Female Influence In Sport

584 views | Jan 20, 2020, 09:10pm EST

James Ayles Former Contributor at SportsMoney  
I specialise in sports news in the UK and across continental Europe

Stacey Copeland has hailed a bright future for women's sport

MANCHESTER CITY FC VIA GETTY IMAGES

Copeland has called for greater investment in women's sport after being unveiled as a key figure in the Women's Sport Trust's Unlocked campaign.

SPORT

Home Football Formula 1 Cricket Rugby U Rugby L Tennis

Disability Sport > Calendar

Evie Toombes: Showjumper with Paralympic dreams on life-changing surgery & invisible illnesses

By Katie Falkingham BBC Sport

13 June 2020 | Disability Sport

Toombes and her brother met the Duke and Duchess of Sussex at the 2018 WellChild Awards where she was presented with the award for Inspirational Young Person

Evie Toombes' motto is "find a way, not an excuse", and it's one that many of us could probably learn from.

We could all learn a lot from Toombes herself, too. At 18, her life has become "unrecognisable from what it could be", in and out of hospital and far from that of a "normal" teenager.

"The biggest thing I have learnt is that your happiness is very much based on your expectations, so if you keep your expectations pretty minimal, you're always going to find some light in things. That mindset seems to really help me to muddle through sometimes," she says.

When BBC Sport speaks to the para-showjumper, she is in hospital awaiting a date for the surgery that will change, and save, her life.

Born with a form of spina bifida which affects the nerves to her legs, bladder and bowel, three years ago Toombes was diagnosed with gastroparesis, a chronic condition in which the stomach cannot empty in the normal way.

INDEPENDENT PREMIUM

## The simple solution that could spark a seismic shift in equality in sport

Boxer Stacey Copeland tells Rachel Steinberg how she wants to dismantle barriers to help encourage everyone — male or female — to take part in whatever sport they enjoy

Tuesday 18 February 2020 11:21

Twitter Facebook LinkedIn YouTube Instagram



yahoo! sport

## Powell insists W Series is just the start for women's motorsport

Sportsbeat  
Yahoo Sport UK 11 Feb 2020, 11:12

Twitter Facebook LinkedIn YouTube Instagram

STYLIST

## Female athletes are being trolled about their bodies and it needs to stop

POSTED BY HIBAH LAURA FOR STRONG WOMEN

Support The Guardian

Available for everyone, funded by readers

Contribute → Subscribe →

News Opinion Sport Culture Lifestyle More

Football Cricket Rugby union Tennis Cycling F1 Golf Boxing Rugby league Racing US sports

Swimming

Interview

## Alice Dearing: 'I don't want to always be referred to as the black swimmer from Britain'

Sean Ingle

Alice Dearing, Britain's best open-water swimmer, is hopeful change will come from the Black Lives Matter protests.

Photograph: Laurence Griffiths/Getty Images

Britain's best in the open water shares her experiences of racism in swimming and how she is breaking barriers for black people to take up the sport

I sounds scarcely believable in modern, multiracial Britain but nearly a century after the sprinter Jack London became the first black athlete to win an Olympic medal for Britain in 1928, and more than 40 years since Viv Anderson became the first black footballer to start for England, Team GB has never sent a black female swimmer to an Olympic Games. Not one.

Book your pneumonia vaccination today





# BESPOKE CAMPAIGNS



## Glorious

CULTURE IN PLAY



### UNLOCKED

### Unlocking The Future

How a new programme from our charity partner The Women's Sport Trust is giving athletes the confidence to make real change and drive our mission forward

By Kate Carter  
Photography by Heiko Prigge  
09/04/21





# BESPOKE CAMPAIGNS



Century turned Bobbie



campaign

**Sun** | [HOME](#) | [SPORT](#) | [NEWS](#) | [MONEY](#) | [DIARY](#) | [TECH](#) | [TRAVEL](#) | [MOTOR](#) | [PUZZLES](#) | [GUNS](#) | [BINGO](#)

## WOMEN OF COURAGE Inspirational female sports heroes reveal how they've triumphed over adversity

Sarah Arnold - Clare O'Reilly  
7 Mar 2020, 20:00

**Melita Emanuel-Carr**  
Team England basketball player



## Sun on Sunday runs International Women's Day special edition

Newspaper claims to be first to do it in run with its main title for 170.

© 2020 Sun on Sunday. All rights reserved. www.sunonunday.co.uk



# JOIN UNLOCKED!



[CLICK FOR APPLICATION FORM](#)

