"From one woman's perspective"
Eva Navarro López
Co-chair of womENcourage
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Welcome to **Wo**manchester, bienvenidos, bienvenidas, benvinguts, أهلاً وَسهلاً (ahlan wa sahlan), marhaba, خــوش آمديــد (khosh amadid), καλώς ήρθατε (kalos orisate), hoşgeldiniz, bienvenue, bem-vindo, benvenuto, Гизер Наталья (dabro pazhalavat), bun venit, pro-she, valkommen, willkommen.

Never in my life have I seen so many women in a department of computer science or engineering or maths! Hello to everyone joining us now through the internet! Special regards "Girls Learning: Code" and the coding group of Ladywood in Birmingham!

Eva opening womENcourage on the red chair

Welcome to the School of Computer Science, a place full of History for computing, where the world's first stored-program computer was designed and where Alan Turing - the father of computer science - with his work on morphogenesis, broke the boundaries of mathematics, computation, biology and chemistry. The first chess problem to be solved by a computer was also here in 1951.

Today, we are making history again! Today is a memorable day, this is the very first Conference organised by ACM-Women Europe, and you are part of it!!! I hope you enjoyed the career fair of yesterday.

The Association for Computing Machinery's committee on women in computing in Europe was created in 2012 within the ACM Europe Council. We want to provide a meeting point for scientists, academics, industry people, teachers and freelancers. ACM-Women Europe is a space to share, discuss and promote new ways of facing the challenges of the next generation of women in computer science and related disciplines. We are dynamic, pursuing fair integration, and driven by positive energy.

This is why the motto for womENcourage 2014 is **"Step up together"**.

Together we have made today a reality, mainly thanks to our generous sponsors and supporters. ACM, ACM Europe, ACM-Women, The University of Manchester, and Google, Bloomberg, Intel, Microsoft, Facebook, Yahoo!Labs and Cisco. **Thank you very much.**

We also want to thank **artist Norma Jeanne Hinsbeeck**, who made our logo and poster as special artwork for womENcourage.

Women in science and technology receive **less** money for research from public funding bodies. We get **less** promotion and **less** mentoring. We often receive **less** salaries than our male colleagues carrying out the same role, although in many cases we have more merits and expertise. We **count for less** in our departments. We are **less** in number ... But today we are **more**, we have 250 participants from 32 different countries, not only from Europe, but also from Palestine, Pakistan, the USA and Israel. We have awarded 55 grants to people from 25 countries, and we have over 45 research posters outside.

We will be more, but we need to include everyone. I want to thank Deborah Gabriel for having founded **Black British Academics** in 2013, and one month ago, the **Black Sister Network**, created in response to the continued marginalisation of black women in academia. In the UK, out of 18,510 professors, only 85 are black, and just 15 are women. I have not been able to identify any of them as computer scientists. What can we do to change this? We need to do more than just pay lip service to equality and diversity.

I am proud to announce that ACM-Women Europe has formed a partnership with Black British Academics to work together and redress the balance through a shared strategy. We need to give a platform to the **voices of the invisible and forgotten** in academia as well as in other walks of life.

Take-up in computer science is low throughout Europe for women. It is important to open the debate about why women are not motivated to be computer scientists and engineers, and identify the barriers that prevent women from advancing in our careers in science. We want to say to the new generation of computer scientists, engineers, mathematicians and scientists, in general, that we are here to help, that they are not alone. We are not scared of overcoming obstacles and making the difference.

We have a very exciting day in front of us.

We want you to express yourself and be the leading protagonist today. On the walls, we are encouraged by the thoughts of all of you, and here are some of them:

"Everything you don't share gets lost"

"Do not underestimate your value"

"Never give up, slow and steady, step by step"

"What would you do if you weren't afraid?"

"Do what you love!"

"Be a happy woman!"

We have also an unconference. Please, you have time until lunch time to write a topic in a post-it and put it on the glass windows outside in the corridor. We will debate these topics together. Our great volunteers will help you. So what do you think it is important to discuss today? Be imaginative, brave and why not? controversial.

To quote Bertolt Brecht:

"There are men who fight for a day, and they are good.
There are men who fight for a year, and they are better.
There are others who fight many years, and they are better still.
But there are those who fight all their lives:
These are the indispensable ones."

And now, from the sublime to the safety conscious, I have some health and safety recommendations. [Inevitable slides in any event in the UK]

And, now, I welcome **Vicki Hanson** from ACM-Women Europe.