

Humans of Humanising Autonomy

A Celebration of Diversity
for Women in Tech as part
of Women's History Month

“For me, feeling comfortable is seeing that everyone is accepted as they are and that there is diversity in leadership. HA has been able to create something unique, where everyone's voice is heard and respected.”

JULIA GOTTSCHALK
Talent Specialist



Creative, diverse and ambitious: our team sets the global standard of how machines understand people.

“I have worked in two male-dominated industries, previously construction and now tech. The one thing I have learned is that you are only limited by your self-perception of what you can achieve - never doubt yourself! Everything else will fall in place as long as you are determined to achieve.”

AYCA GEDIK
Project Coordinator



Representing more than 15 countries, our team at Humanising Autonomy comprises over forty of the brightest minds across business, behavioural psychology, data science, design, deep learning, engineering, policy making, product development and strategy.

Our technology team holds PhDs in autonomous robotics, computer vision and vulnerable road user psychology. Our commercial and leadership teams have decades of experience working at Fortune 500, Blue Chip and

global companies, including Bosch, Condé Nast, IBM, GE Healthcare, Panasonic, Qualcomm, Sony and Siemens. Our combined collective knowledge and experience allows us to build a powerful and ethical AI platform effectively and efficiently.

As part of Women’s History Month (which at our company, we celebrate all year long!), we asked the women in our team four questions.



“Don’t be intimidated and don’t let stereotypes hold you back from pursuing a career in tech. Like HA, the tech industry is composed of people from all backgrounds, races, sexes, and locations, with hundreds of different career possibilities. Explore what makes you curious and see where it goes!”

RHEA PANDYA
Growth Marketing Manager

QUESTION

What's one thing you especially care about when joining a company that makes you feel welcome and comfortable to be yourself?

ANSWERS

"Working for a company that cares about diversity is really important to me. Having discussions with people from different backgrounds can really make a difference in a project and it's also really rewarding on the personal level."

CAROLINE

"Something that drew me to working in startups is that concept that my contribution to the various projects is recognised and appreciated and receives praise when I have worked hard to produce something. At HA, I've never felt like just a number but rather as a part of a team."

TAHLIA

"That there are no hidden and metaphoric minefields through which you're expected to navigate. The world is stressful enough – to have to remember which filters, tone of voice or expected persona you must apply to yourself is even more so exhausting. It's a good feeling to be able to just focus on doing a good job, and to feel safe and free enough to use your own voice, share your true opinion and to be heard."

KIM

"I care about people, when people are caring and open-minded, I would feel motivated to be part of their team."

ZEINA

"I'm very grateful to have colleagues that listen to my ideas and worries, regardless of my gender or position. I think we have built a really nice community in Humanising Autonomy where we can be always comfortable expressing ourselves and we support each other."

AINA

"The team and culture - the work you do is similar wherever you go. What makes the difference is the people you work with and the environment you work in. It is also very refreshing to see women in senior management positions. HA is great on all these points!"

AYCA

"Believing in me without any gender bias. When I first joined HA, I was assigned with some really interesting and challenging projects. HA believed in me that I could handle those projects on my own and when I solved them, I felt very appreciated. Sense of appreciation, respect and belief are some things that I value the most in a company and I got that in HA."

YAZHINI



HUMANISING AUTONOMY

“It’s important to me that a company embraces its employees’ individuality and supports their general wellbeing. The environment at Humanising Autonomy is one where unique ideas are encouraged, open communication is the norm, flexible working styles are supported and mental health is championed. This makes me feel valued, inspired and part of a family rather than a corporation.”

MESGANA

“When I can talk about my home life without hiding the fact that I have children and a personal life that sometimes needs me more than work.”

ANNA

“The culture and diversity of the company. It’s important to choose a role that matches your technical expectations. However, I think the overall harmony and work environment that comes across a company has more importance. I always look for and work for people I admire and respect. A company where it is possible to establish good relationships where we care for each other.”

LOU-ANN

“I love the remote working with needed visits to the office as I love working from my home office on the south coast in Worthing. I can go for a bike ride and a run along the coastline at the end of the workday instead of spending time on a long commute in the tube. I also love flexi-time as I like to start early, sometimes as early as 5:30 a.m., especially when I think of ideas overnight for previous day’s problems that I get excited about. I can go out for a lunch break at a restaurant. And then I can work till quite late when needed.”

T

“When joining a company and you meet the founders, the team and you realise they are all just being their true self, quirks and all and without any fronts - it is very easy to come as you are and feel welcomed!”

WIES

“Feeling like my team/ company cares about me as a person.”

ALINA

“I care about working for a company that takes DE&I seriously. At HA, we can celebrate our dimensions of difference, our points of intersectionality, our potential and humanity all year round.”

RHEA

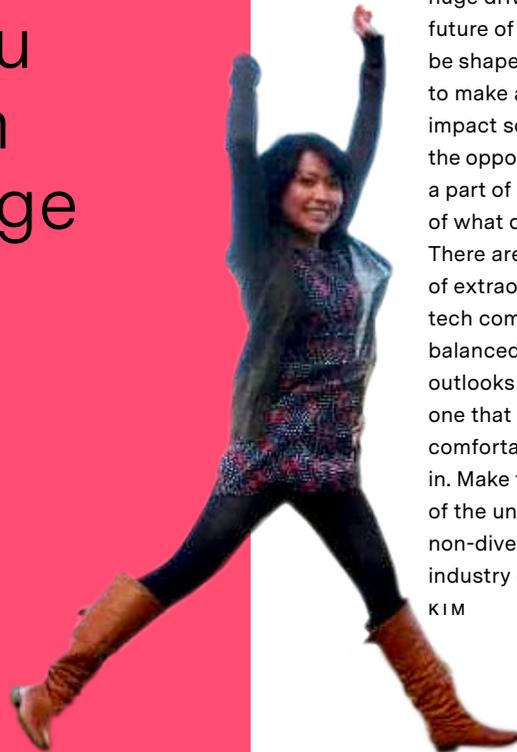
“I’m extremely impressed with Humanising Autonomy’s principles and dedication to diversity. Teamwork and inclusiveness are essential components of respecting diversity. I make every effort to learn from those around me and keen to pick up new skills. Cultural variety enhances the workplace and strengthens us as a team.”

SIAMA



QUESTION

Some women are still hesitant to work in the tech industry. What advice or insight would you like to share with them to encourage them to join?



ANSWERS

“Be an Ally for underrepresented folks by amplifying their voices and advocating for them.”

SIAMA

“The tech industry is a huge driver in how the future of the world will be shaped. If you want to make a change or impact society, seize the opportunity and be a part of it, regardless of what others think. There are plenty of extraordinary tech companies with balanced and diverse outlooks – find the one that lets you feel comfortable and jump in. Make the stereotype of the unwelcome, non-diverse tech industry outdated.”

KIM

“I think one important advice would be: don’t be intimidated. Having curiosity and interest in technology are the main reason of choosing a career in tech industry. You shouldn’t be afraid of not having enough technical knowledge as you can acquire them along the way. Curiosity should inspire you to face problems and identify the solutions. Career in technology doesn’t only imply technical knowledge but also leadership and mentorship. Don’t let the negative people intimidate you. Don’t be afraid to push forward and ask for what you want. Don’t give up on your dreams and keep a positive attitude.”

LOU-ANN

“I’ve never really had any hesitation about working in the tech industry. I knew what I wanted to do and so focused on that and simply ignored anyone that might argue against it. It’s also about finding the right company that actively promotes equality and trusting your gut if a role doesn’t feel right.”

TAHLIA

“It may look or feel scary at first, but remember that when you’re interviewing for a role, the company must sell itself to you just as much as you have to convince them of your knowledge and skills. It’s OK to turn down great roles if things don’t feel right.”

PADDY

“The tech industry is such an exciting space to be in right now. There is constant innovation happening and something new to learn every day. We need more women to shape the future of technology by sharing their unique perspectives and experiences. Products created are only as good as the teams behind them and if a diverse team is involved then we can rest assured that the product will be inclusive of everyone’s needs. I would therefore encourage girls to explore STEM courses, connect with female mentors in tech industries and get hands-on industry experience as early as they can.”

MESGANA

HUMANISING AUTONOMY

“If women are hesitant to work in the tech industry, I think it is even more important to join and do what you can for other women to break away from barriers and hesitations. I think as women it is our responsibility to help break these barriers for the next generation of humans.”
WIES

“Mathematics and tech is COOL; it is no longer considered “nerdy.” It is also very intellectually rewarding. There are many companies looking to welcome you, needing to balance out the team composition. So, you will have many opportunities to find your home and be your best.”
T



“As someone that speaks with numerous candidates, I will always encourage women to speak up, and stay positive about their experience/ qualifications. Many times, as women we place more pressure and doubt on ourselves than we should. Tech is an amazing industry, with a lot of flexibility, and I think as women we should use this to our advantage!”
JULIA

“There are many industries women are stereotyped to join. And the tech industry is considered to be uncommon for women. However, use that to your advantage and make yourself unique and special. Do not be instructed by the society. Choose the rarest paths in your career and you will shine brightly!”
YAZHINI

“Tech can be an amazing career with great lifestyle benefits helping you balance your work/ life. It offers great career opportunities to manage, lead teams, and have continuous learning. This is what we live and breathe at HA.”
ANNA

“I think there are still many women that don’t see the tech industry as a place for them, especially if they have people around telling them they won’t be able to do the work. If you’re one of them, don’t let anyone discourage you from joining an industry that’s growing and here you can probably find very interesting and stable positions, you can do it and we will support you!”
AINA

“Believe in yourself and not in stereotypes, do the things that you would like to do.”
ZEINA



“I believe that it is important to follow your passion, regardless of how difficult an industry might seem. If you are excited about science, technology and having a societal impact, there is a good chance that the tech industry is right for you. I would encourage every woman interested in working in tech to look for companies that are truly diverse and inclusive. After all, societal impact is only possible if created by teams that represent society.”

MAYA

QUESTION

Name a defining point in your career that helped you get where you are (a mentor, a school course, a project, a gamble, etc).



ANSWERS

“Because of my math teacher in high school, I chose to study engineering. She pushed me and motivated me to apply for the entry exam. But I think what led to where I am now is the moment I decided to leave my hometown for an Erasmus in Switzerland. Leaving abroad and traveling helped me to become more independent. Since then, I couldn’t go back home and kept going around the world, discovering new fields of mobile robotics. This led me to London, my passion for robotics and embedded systems and the career path I chose.”

LOU-ANN

“When you live by your values, you feel better about yourself and are more focused on doing the things that are important to you.”

SIAMA

“I think it’s when I decided to move from construction to tech - although I really enjoyed working in construction, I knew I had to try something new to challenge myself - it was a gamble since I have no training and experience in tech but it has been working out very well so far.”

AYCA

“Back in the day, it wasn’t considered ideal to be a ‘Jack of All Trades’. Fortunately, it turned out that having a wide set of diverse interests and skillset is perfect for startups, scaleups and smaller business units, where creative thinking and hands-on flexibility are required. I’m grateful to all those who took the time - no matter how short or long - to share their insight with me throughout the years.”

KIM

“I obtained a French scholarship to pursue a masters degree which opened lots of opportunities for me afterwards.”

ZEINA

“After graduating college, I had the unique opportunity to go through an engineering rotational program at Fiat Chrysler Automobiles that allowed me to gain hands-on experience in different organizations from product design, product development to manufacturing. My favourite rotation was in the ADAS team where I worked closely with a senior engineer to create tests that would validate an automated driving vehicle. Working in this group got me excited about autonomous vehicles and the disruption of technology in mobility and other sectors.”

MESGANA

“At university (go Rutgers!) I specialised in Diversity and Inclusion within the workplace. This really opened my eyes to how so many businesses were not inclusive for so many individuals. It is systematically extremely challenging for individuals to challenge big corporations. I really want to help facilitate a positive change from within businesses, so everyone feels comfortable to be heard, and succeed at their role.”

JULIA

“My parents helped me to get where I am today by sheer encouragement and support.”

TAHLIA

“Getting born to my mother. She is a teacher with a degree in geology and geography. She brought me up to be who I am. Everything I have achieved is due to the foundation and drive she instilled in me bringing me up. Secondly, starting after-school tuition with my 8th grade mathematics tutor. I was being brought up to be a medical doctor. It is due to my mathematics tutor that discovered I loved mathematics and decided to be an engineer. That was my teenage rebellion, declaring I would read mathematical subjects in high school instead of biology.”

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“I wouldn't be where I am today if I hadn't pursued and often gambled on international opportunities, including during my studies and professional career.”

PADDY

“I don't think there was a one defining point, but a series of fortunate events: from the computer science course I've done in high school that was hugely influential for me choosing this field as future career, to a competition on robotics I took part during my undergrad degree that showed me how amazing the AI field is.”

ALINA

“When I was offered a scholarship to study in National University of Singapore at the age of 17, every person around me didn't want me to take it up, except my mother. All others felt that it would be very challenging for a girl of age 17 to fly far away from home country and study abroad alone. This assumption was made mainly because I am a woman. However, my mother believed that I could do it and she supported me tremendously throughout my education and career. If she had believed like everyone else did, then I would definitely have not achieved what I am now.”

YAZHINI

“When I came back from my first maternity leave and was instantly demoted, this made me change how I look at life, at what I used to take for granted, and made me more determined than ever to be very vocal supporter of women and parents in general at all levels of their career.” ANNA



QUESTION

Which mentor, leader or hero do you want to thank?

“My mother, for giving me all of the encouragements to do the things I like no matter where they are, even if it means being far from her.”

ZEINA



ANSWERS

“My mother - who showed me that strong women can do anything they want and should never apologise for who they are.”

ANNA

“My 2 mathematics tutors during school years. And my 8th grade English teacher who made David Copperfield come alive for me.”

T

“My older sister, Burcin - she has always been a great role model to me and has shown me that there is nothing that we can't achieve as women if we put our minds to it! I will always be thankful to her.”

AYCA

“It's very important to have women role models to keep yourself motivated and have some references to find your path. For me, there are two women that inspired me in very different ways.

Firstly, Fran Kalal, for working in one of my favourite industries, that is 3D animation and for combining my two passions that are technology and art. Secondly, Melanie Perkins, for founding one of my favourite tech companies, when female founders in tech are a really small percentage. I would add our CEO, Maya Pindeus, in this list.”

AINA

“I'm inspired by my mum who continues to show resilience and determination even when faced with uncertainty or challenging situations, whilst remaining positive and with a smile on her face!”

RHEA

“I would definitely like to thank my grandma for always showing that you do not have to conform to what society wants to see from you. Further, I have a great group of female friends who are really career driven. We always trade advice, and I think having that support really helps to make things easier along the way.”

JULIA

“Thank you to all the strong and intelligent women in my life (mother, sisters, grandmothers, aunts, friends), and at work (managers, team members, directors, senior leaders). I'd also like to say thank you to every and any woman who has helped pave the way for the next. Keep shining like a beacon because you'll inspire someone out there.”

KIM

“My mum for always pushing me to succeed and go after what I want. My high school math teacher who convinced me to pursue engineering and believed in me.”

LOU-ANN

At Humanising Autonomy, we celebrate our humans everyday.

“It’s a feeling of belonging and togetherness that allows me to truly be myself. You can tell when you walk into an office if the people are genuine and care for each other.”

PADDY LA TORRE
Head of Strategic
Partnerships



“I decided to join my engineering school and that led me to acquire the skills and knowledge required to get the position I wanted afterwards.”

CAROLINE MONTASSIER
Software Engineer

“Sometimes you know what you want to do but you don’t have any idea how to achieve it. For me, it was really helpful in these situations to have some discussions

with my classmates, colleagues and teachers and talk to people with similar experiences or interests to find out my own way to reach my goals.”

AINA NICOLAU ORELL
Software Engineer



“The tech industry is so vast that sometimes you can feel overwhelmed. So don’t be intimidated, take it one step at a time, be patient with yourself while you learn and most important: be curious.”

ALINA MIRON
Computer Vision Deep
Learning Engineer



“It was not my plan to work in a company, but when I did do it during an internship at university I saw how the corporate world is, as a micro version reflecting the wider world, so broken. Then I realised that through my role, I actually had the power and responsibility to make a meaningful change from the inside out.”

WIES MILLENAAR
Head of People



“When I was a child in the 80s a family friend said to my Mum ‘that her daughter one day would become the private secretary to the Managing Director’, to which my Mum breezily replied, ‘Well, my daughter will become the Managing Director’. Since then, being a woman has never held me back from trying anything new and I’ve always felt the sky’s the limit.”

SANNA RANDELIUS
Sales Engineer



Featuring answers from:

Zeina Abu-Aisheh
Computer Vision
Research Scientist

Mesgana Asmelash
Senior Product Manager

Yazhini Chitra Pradeep
Senior Computer Vision
and Deep Learning Scientist

Tahlia Cutifani
Software Engineer

Ayca Gedik
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Julia Gottschalk
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T X Karuna
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Kim Vigilia
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