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WiNUK Wrapped 2024: A year in review

Hello, readers!

2024 has been a monumental year for Women in Neuroscience UK (WiNUK), marked by huge growth, many firsts and some fantastic new partnerships. If you're new to who we are and what we do, in a nutshell WiNUK tackles gender inequalities in neuroscience through a multi-platform approach, developing events, blogs, social media, and newsletters, to inspire, connect and advocate for a world of inclusive neuroscience. Let's take some time to reflect on our highlights from 2024:

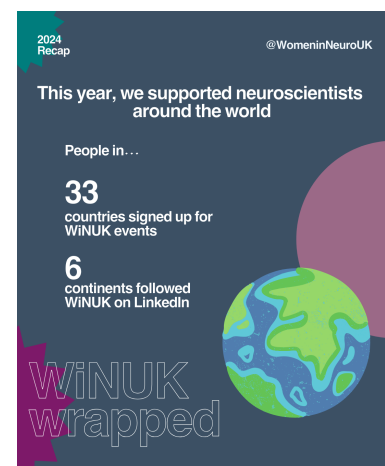
1. We grew our volunteer team!

Over the past 12 months, we have more than doubled our volunteer team size, welcoming over 40 new volunteers to WiNUK across our sub-teams (alongside many more guest writers for the blog too!). Check out our impressive team on [Our Team page](#) here.

We created four brand new sub-teams to continue our organisation's sustainable growth: In-Person Events, Human Resources, Partnerships and Finance. We even established ourselves as a company limited by guarantee - exciting!

2. Our Global Impact Increased

WiNUK was founded in the UK, but that doesn't stop us engaging with neuroscientists all over the world - you're following us on social media from six continents! We've loved seeing you signing up to our events, following our social media posts and reading our blog articles from 33 countries!



Across platforms, we estimate a total of 5000-6000 followers, doubling our community compared to the previous year. WiNUK saw significant growth on social media, surpassing 1,000 followers on each major social media platform (excluding TikTok), demonstrating increased community interest and engagement. Thanks to our amazing expanding community, WiNUK has the pleasure of ending 2024 celebrating significant community growth.

Each month we brought our subscribers our WiNUK newsletter, updating you with exclusive content, updates and sneak peeks! 323 more of you joined our mailing list this year (there are now nearly 700 of you!), to hear about our monthly highlights across WiNUK platforms. If you're not yet signed up, [register for our mailing list at the bottom of our website](#).



We also welcomed 70% more WiNUK website members in 2024! [You can register to join our website](#) at the top right of our website, to interact with our blogs and receive email updates when new articles are released.

3. 2024 - The Year of WiNUK In-Person Events!

We were very busy with in-person events this year! With 4 conference stalls and 6 in-person workshops, from an LGBTQ+ research showcase to the inaugural WiNUK awards ceremony, there was plenty to attend!

For our first ever in-person event, our founder, Lizzie English, held an informative and engaging session at the '*Alzheimer's Research UK (ARUK) Annual Conference*' in Liverpool, with 200 attendees learning more about statistics, panelists' experiences and strategies to tackle the gender gaps in dementia research. Read more about our experience at [ARUK 2024 here](#). It was a well-attended session and 100% of our WiNUK survey respondents found the session very interesting, enjoyable and useful! Attendees thought it was "great that ARUK [was] providing space for these important topics", that for someone starting out in their career it was especially "valuable to hear panel experiences" and that the "statistics shown...provide[d] concrete evidence of the issue" which made them want to be "more outspoken about gender equity and be[come] an ally". The only request was to make the session longer! We also featured an exhibition stall to engage with attendees and advertise our organisation.





In our mission to reach neuroscientists across the UK, we attended 'ARUK ECR Days' in Cambridge and in Plymouth. At the South West ECR Day, we found that 35% of attendees were unaware of the gender bias in dementia research workplaces, with the event prompting reflection for attendees about how subtle biases can persist. Attendees liked Lizzie's suggestions of "simple actions towards inclusive workplaces" which were "inclusive of all genders while addressing women's issues – it foster[ed] solidarity".

At our conference stalls, in Cambridge, Liverpool and Harrogate, we distributed our brand new flyers and merchandise, including stickers and badges! We have loved seeing your reactions and social media posts about these. Across the year, we conducted trial research surveys at our conference stalls and talks to investigate your experiences of sexism and gender bias. Thanks for helping us to understand your experiences and allowing us to take inspiration from these to tailor WiNUK's strategies.

In London we supported the UCL Faculty of Brain Sciences 'LGBTQ+ Research Showcase', recommending Dr [Lara Montefiori](#) and Monique Joy Raranga for the valuable interactive panel, exploring gender and queer identity as neuroscientists. It was a pleasure to establish a collaboration with Dr [Fábio Ribeiro Rodrigues](#) and the UCL Faculty of Brain Sciences LGBTQ+ Committee, to provide more tailored support for LGBTQ+ members of our community and beyond, to celebrate intersectional diversity, and facilitate greater changes towards inclusion.

Tracy Chong and Riya Verma, two of our incredible volunteers, spoke at 'Healthcare Heroes' at King's College London with [The Elephant Group](#), a social mobility charity with a mission to ensure academically capable young people from non-selective state schools understand their potential to attend the UK's leading universities. Student feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with over 92% of survey respondents finding the session interesting and enjoyable, and 100% of respondents finding the session useful: "I am very grateful they got involved because the information was very useful to me and it gave me more motivation to work towards my goals".

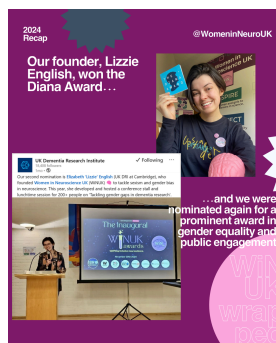
4. We Hosted and We Won Awards!

Last, but very much not least, it was an absolute pleasure to host our own awards ceremony this year too - the inaugural 'Women in Neuroscience UK Awards' at the University of

Cambridge in November. We wanted to honour the unsung heroes in neuroscience across various categories, including mentoring, neuroscience communication and inclusive workplaces! It was fantastic to celebrate our incredible volunteers too, and a special mention to our keynote speaker, Dr Flaminia Ronca! The event was well-attended in-person and virtually, with more than 100 of you joining in. Feedback included that it was a “great opportunity to celebrate many amazing women in neuroscience” with a “great sense of community” and a “positive and supportive atmosphere”. Keep your eyes peeled for blog pieces on our award winners and maybe even WiNUK Awards 2025?!

We also won awards for WiNUK. Our founder, Lizzie English, was recently awarded the [Diana Award](#) for her social activism work as a young person, creating Women in Neuroscience UK. Congratulations, Lizzie!

Lizzie and Women in Neuroscience UK were also nominated for the second year running for the [UK DRI Engagement Prize](#).



5. We Began Exciting Collaborations

This year we have established some important partnerships and sponsorships, helping us to support our organisation’s developments to broaden and deepen our inclusive impacts in the field of neuroscience.

Without our new sponsors, we could never have hosted our incredibly successful (and first ever!) Awards Event - a huge thank you to Wellcome Trust, ARUK, UKDRI, BNA, IBRO, Scientifica and the University of Cambridge for supporting this event.

We collaborate with all types of organisations, big and small, across a number of sectors - if you have a commitment to empowering



women in neuroscience to reach new heights, then you're in the right place.

What do WiNUK look for in their partners?

- You or your organisation value diversity and inclusion.
- You or your organisation would like to value diversity and inclusion more.
- You want women to be more fairly treated and represented, in neuroscience workplaces and neuroscience research.
- You want to become part of a movement for positive change.
- You want to make a real impact in tackling gender inequalities in neuroscience.
- You see the value collaboration can have in catalysing impact.
- You want your support to be felt and to be showcased.
- You would like to take advantage of tailored benefits to suit your organisation's goals.

How might you benefit?

- Increase your brand visibility to diverse clients and talented potential candidates.
- Showcase your commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion.
- Progress towards your companies' mission statements, values and objectives to champion diversity, address inequalities, and support an inclusive workforce.

How can you become a partner?

1. Awards sponsorship
 - a. Get involved in WiNUK Awards 2025 to uplift female neuroscientists and the broader neuroscience community. Feature your logo on our award materials, attend the event and present the award for your sponsored category!
2. Event sponsorship
 - a. Collaborate with WiNUK on a new or existing event: improving workplace understanding on sexism and gender bias for cultural change, or connecting diverse neuroscientists through careers/networking events. You can offer to provide a talk, attend our events, or provide a venue for us.
3. Advertising
 - a. Bring your ideas and opportunities to our audience via paid partnerships highlighting your products/services/jobs in the WiNUK newsletter, blog, social media, or events.
4. Founding Partnership
 - a. Incorporating all of the above and more, becoming a Founding Partner will enable you to collaborate with WiNUK on multiple fronts, allowing you to make the most impact, whilst supporting the long-term sustainability of WiNUK.



We understand that each organisation has unique goals and aims when it comes to supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion in neuroscience. Therefore, our annual WiNUK Founding Partner package is flexible, meaning you can choose the level of collaboration and commitment that is right for you. Choose to *Support*, *Inspire*, *Elevate* or *Transform* WiNUK and the work we do!

Our Partnerships Team can consult on the benefits of each partnership tier, and help you to choose the most effective collaboration based on your goals and needs. **For more information, please email partner.womeninneuroscience.uk@gmail.com to enquire.**

Let's see what else WiNUK got up to across our different platforms...

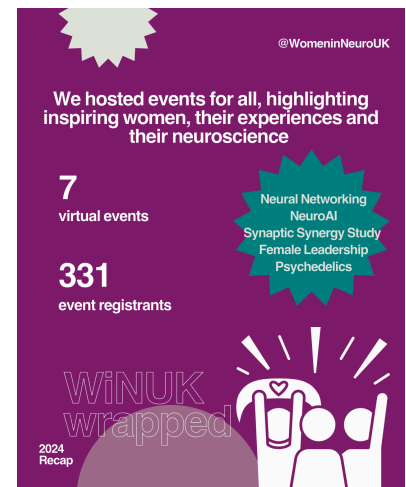
6. We Hosted Seven Virtual Events

We continued our 2023 virtual event momentum into 2024, hosting 7 events, with a total of 331 sign-ups! We aimed to provide networking opportunities and share careers advice, as well as neuroscience knowledge.

With free-to-access virtual events, we attracted a global and diverse audience, from countries including the UK, USA, India and across Europe. Our inclusivity ensured that participants of all career stages could access our events, from undergraduates to industry scientists and lecturers!

In February, April and June, we hosted our '*Neural Networking*' event series, exploring inspirational career journeys! With over 30 members of our community, we discussed our motivations to enter the field of neuroscience and shared visions for the future of our scientific communities. Check out what you thought of these sessions in our [testimonials](#)!

In May, we held a '*Synaptic Synergy Study Session*' to create a supportive space to keep each other accountable



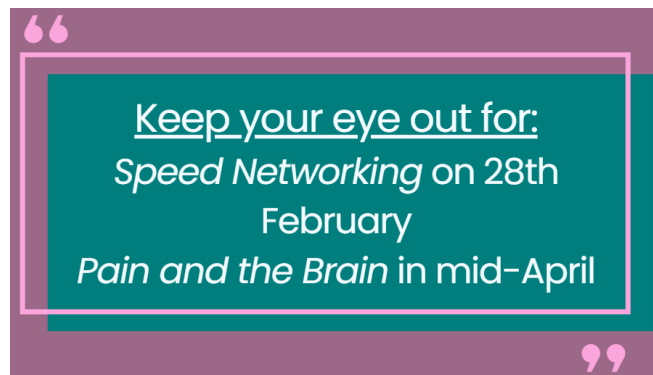
and motivated whilst studying for exams or working towards deadlines. We made some meaningful connections with our community and shared study strategies and challenges and strategies during the study breaks!

A session on NeuroAI '*Future Neuro: Women in AI, tech and computation*' was held in July, where we heard from Gatsby Computational Neuroscience Unit's Clementine Domine and Computational Psychiatrist PhD Researcher, Ludmila Kucikova. They were fascinating, delving into their groundbreaking work on deep learning theory, artificial neural networks and machine learning in neuroscience research.

In August, we hosted the insightful session, '*Female Leadership: Being Successful While Being Yourself*', featuring a talk by Stephanie Grönke. The discussion delved into tackling imposter syndrome, harnessing personal strengths, and building confidence in professional spaces.. Attendees found the event to be "thought-provoking, empowering, inspiring [and] reflective", with the most memorable part being the emphasis on "the importance of setting yourself up in an environment that values you".

Your favourite event was October's '*Psychedelics and the Brain*', with 87 of you signing up! You heard from Dr Danielle Kurtin, who investigates the neural underpinnings of substance (mis)use/dependence; Ms. Susan Guner, a holistic psychotherapist and host of the Psychedelics Conversations podcast, who shared insights into how psychedelics are helping those suffering from illnesses; and Professor Emma Robinson, Professor of Psychopharmacology who explored her research on affective biases and emotional behavior in rodents using psychedelic drugs. You actively participated in the chat and shared resources with each other (which was great to see). You shared feedback relating to the "thought-provoking" and "empowering" nature of the event.

We have lots more exciting events coming up this year!



[Sign up for Speed Networking here.](#)

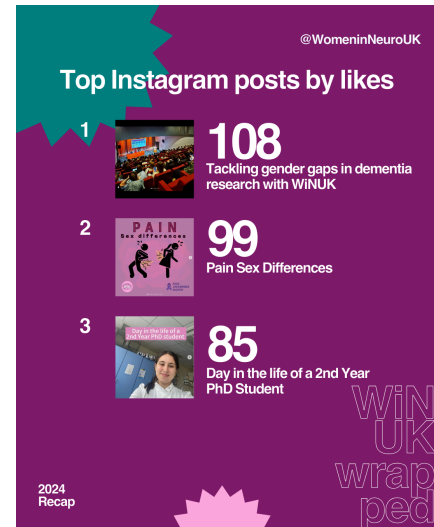
7. Our Community Rapidly Grew on Social Media



From volunteer recruitment posts, to a 'day in the life', to gender gaps in research, we shared a lot with you on social media in 2024! You particularly enjoyed trending themes, such as artificial intelligence in neuroscience, and sex differences in pain, which captured over 50% of non-follower engagement. Together, we celebrated 13 awareness days throughout the year, including International Women's Day and the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, amplifying WiNUK's visibility by aligning with our core community values. Brain Awareness Week was particularly busy for us this year, with daily videos, [graphics](#) and [blog](#) posts sharing neuroscience knowledge.

Most of our social media community can be found on LinkedIn, with more than 2.4k followers in 2024, growing from 1.6k the previous year. With 64% of our [LinkedIn](#) views coming from mobile devices, we made sure to keep our content accessible and scroll-friendly for professionals on-the-go, making over 140,000 impressions!

In 2024, we uploaded 158 posts and 20 reels to [Instagram](#) and turned engagement into growth, nearly doubling our 2023 follower count! Our "We are recruiting" posts stole the spotlight, gaining over 6,000 views. You also enjoyed our ongoing "Present Your Lab Technique series", which showcased 3 projects this year. Your favourite three posts were "[Tackling gender gaps in dementia research with WiNUK](#)", "[Day in the life of a 2nd year PhD student](#)", and "[Pain Sex Differences](#)"!



In 2024 we went [TikTok](#) viral! We increased our followers by 1827%, posting 31 times and gaining lots of new viewers. You particularly liked our [Work-life balance?](#), '[Day in the life of an early career researcher](#)' and '[Meet the WiNUK team](#)' posts, with combined views of over 9000. Around 80% of our views were from new viewers - welcome to the WiNUK community! Our "Day in the Life" ongoing series offers viewers insights into neuroscience research and careers which we hope encourages and inspires our younger viewers. Follow us [here](#) to see WiNUK on TikTok!

Posts celebrating events like [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#) and [ARUK24](#) drove the highest engagement on [X](#) this year, with the power of conversation reflected by the engagement from audiences across over 15 countries. It is amazing for everyone at WiNUK to see how our social media platforms continue to foster global networking and enable us to connect and inspire a diverse and growing community.



8. Our Blog Took Off!

Our blogs have expanded in quantity and engagement again this year, bringing you 40 fascinating new articles with 3.8k reads (a 63% increase on last year!). 180 more of you [subscribed](#) at the top right of our website, to be the first to hear about brand new blog articles.

We welcomed lots of new guest writers to our blog channel - we now number over 70 people! We took on lots of important topics, including [impostor syndrome](#), [sex and gender disparities in neuroscience](#) and the ethics surrounding the use of [HeLa cells](#).

2024 saw the launch of another successful blog series, 'Bridging the Gap', in which we interview women in neuroscience to discuss the gaps and the health inequalities in different areas of the field, as well as the exciting new research that is attempting to 'bridge' these gaps! So far, we have covered [multiple sclerosis](#), [pain in neurodiverse and gender diverse young people](#) and [ADHD](#). If you would like to feature your research/work, please get [in touch](#).

We also continued our 'Spotlight On' series, interviewing a range of neuroscientists. We chatted to a [neurobiologist in industry](#), a researcher who [brings physics to neuroscience](#), a lecturer who researches [ADHD in women and girls](#) and a postdoctoral research fellow who [studies brain tumours](#).

Of our three blog sections, you loved 'Reality' the most, viewing our articles 2,311 times! You heard from lots of fascinating neuroscientists in our interview series and received tips and tricks from our writers. Our most read 'Reality' article was Naomi Thorne's ['Finding Funding: How to fund a conference trip'](#).

Our most popular 'Research' article, and our most read blog of 2024 overall, was Neave Smith's ['Does it hurt more being a woman? Understanding Sex Differences in Pain Perception'](#), with 444 reads.

Finally, our most read 'Review' article was last year's [WiNUK Wrapped](#), where we summarised all of our highlights from 2023.



In the last 6 months of 2024, some different articles came out on top: for 'Reality' Rachel McKeown's ['Spotlight On' with Eva Kreysing](#) and for 'Review' a book review of ['Time Shelter'](#) by Rebecca Pope (hey, that's me!).

It has been fantastic to lead and work with such an amazing group of writers and editors, and to see our incredible growth over the past year! Special thanks goes to you all for working so hard, and to our illustrator Lilly Green, who creates all of our beautiful blog graphics.

If you're keen to develop your science writing skills this year, whether you have your own idea for a blog or would prefer to be inspired by our editors' prompts, head to our [Writer's Guide](#), or get in touch with us via email at blog.womeninneuroscience.uk@gmail.com, to find out more.

What's next?

Beyond these metrics, we are so proud of the meaningful connections and important conversations we've sparked throughout the year. None of this would be possible without you and our fantastic volunteers. As we look to 2025, we are excited to continue growing our community to inspire and engage current and/or aspiring female neuroscientists worldwide. Here's to an even more successful 2025 and continuing to build a brighter and more equitable scientific field!

Join us in 2025 for more inspiring neuroscience and careers advice, networking connections, and advocacy for inclusive science communities for all.

We've got lots more for you in the coming year, so stay tuned to our social media and mailing list! But if you can't wait for that, here's a sneak peek...



To all our WiNUK supporters, I wish you a happy and healthy 2025, filled with many successes!

From Rebecca Pope, Blog Coordinator & Editor

Other image/info inspo:

2024 RECAP

1. Expand to in-person events



**Organised 6
workshops**



**Attended 4
conference stalls**



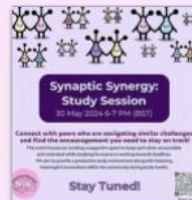
**Hosted the WiNUK
Awards**

2024 RECAP

2. Enhance networking opportunities



**Expanded in-person
and virtual
networking**



**Grew peer
mentoring and
connection**



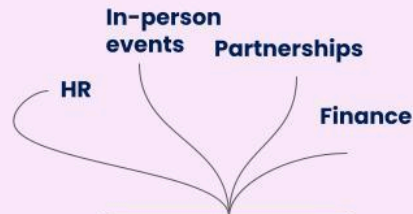
**Boosted community
engagement**

2024 RECAP

3. Establish Formal Company Structure



Established as a company limited by guarantee



Formed new WiNUK teams



Launched Founding Partnerships package

2024 RECAP

The Year in Numbers

Community

2024

vs 2023

Mailing list members

696

+115%

Website members

156

+70%

Social media followers

> 5000

+100%

Blogs

Articles

40

+5%

Readership

3800

+64%

WiNUK team

Volunteers

80

+100%



2024 RECAP

The Year in Numbers

| Events | 2024 | vs 2023 |
|--------------------|------|---------|
| Virtual events | 7 | +17% |
| Sign-ups (virtual) | 331 | -40% |
| In person events | 11 | NEW |

2025:

- *Scaling down quantity of virtual events for quality > quantity and longer promotions*
- *Aim to measure attendance rate: attendees/sign-ups*

2024 RECAP

The Year in Numbers

| WiNUK Awards | 2024 | | vs 2023 |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Nominations | >100 | | NEW |
| Nominee institutions | 16 | | NEW |
| Sponsors | 7 | | NEW |
| In-person volunteers | 19 | | NEW |
| Judges | 22 | | NEW |
| | In-person | Virtual | |
| Attendees | 80 | 25 | NEW |
| Attendance rate | >95% | 58% | NEW |