

'Be Inclusive': Global Business Gurus Tell LEAP23 Attendees to Seek Boardroom Diversity and Reap the Benefits

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- LEAP23, the world's most visionary technology event, finished its four-day run in Riyadh on Thursday with Steven Bartlett, the Botswana-born British entrepreneur, and Baroness Karren Brady CBE expounding the importance of diversity and inclusion to create a successful business.

Bartlett is a best-selling author and produces Diary of a CEO, one of the world's most-downloaded podcast series. During a session inside the Riyadh Front Exhibition and Conference Centre, the 31-year-old discussed the rapid pace of change and, citing former US President Barack Obama, the importance of building a team representative of a diverse world.

"We both spoke at a conference in Sao Paulo and he said to Brazil: If you are not inclusive as a country, all you are doing is punishing yourself because you are leaving your talent off the field," Bartlett said. "If you leave people off the field, you have a blind spot – as a country, as a business, in any project you are building. It is a competitive advantage to be inclusive in the boardroom when key decisions are made because if you are not, you are only hurting yourself."

The same premise of diversity works when it comes to the creation and innovation process, said



Bartlett, who is the youngest-ever investor on hit British TV show *Dragons' Den*.

"There are five of us on the panel, but only one mother, so if an entrepreneur was pitching a product for mothers and she wasn't there, it would be very easy to see how we could end up deploying our capital without fully understanding the problem the product is trying to solve," he told attendees during a fireside discussion. "If you want to build something that is representative of the world – whether it's in VR, AI, or whatever – you need to make sure the data going in is truly representative or you'll be disadvantaged because you'll create imbalanced products that don't fully represent the market."

Continuing the theme of diversity in the workplace, Brady – the first female managing director of a top-flight English football club and the youngest MD of a British private limited

company – said that even while women continue to play catch-up in terms of the gender pay-gap, the benefits of having women in positions of power cannot be overstated.

"For every £1 a man makes, a woman makes 86p," said Brady, returning to LEAP for a second consecutive year. "But now you can see women changing the course; they understand their worth and are prepared to step outside their comfort zone and show determination to get the career they want. Women are great in leadership roles. They galvanise a collective spirit, they manage people's hearts and minds. They bring those things together, see opportunities, and work in a collaborative way. And because of that we are seeing more and more women getting seats around that table."

LEAP23 also culminated in the finale of DeepFest, a new co-located event held in partnership with the Saudi Data & Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA). Themed AI Beyond Imagination, DeepFest gathered drivers of the global AI ecosystem to unveil multi-sector initiatives to home in on AI implementation in areas such as clean tech, the Metaverse, women in technology, robotics, and more.



The final day of DeepFest saw Luc Vincent, VP Engineering & Product Group Lead for AI at Meta, enthral audiences with an exclusive look at next-generation AR glasses and cognitive AI technology in a keynote session entitled: AI for Augmented Reality.

“We believe that AR glasses can potentially help billions of people around the world and be more useful than the smartphones we carry in our pockets today. The potential of AR glasses for egocentric experiences is unlimited,” said Vincent. “AR glasses can unlock communications and instant translation, enable voice-command photography and smart capture, heighten location services, and enable numerous other smart actions.

“In time, AR glasses will start to recognise context in different situations and notify the user of high-value moments. AR glasses will learn your goals and prompt smart reminders for shopping lists, birthday presents, remembering important documents, and so on. We call this cognitive AI. It’s incredible and the surface has only been scratched - but the key tech to enable all these experiences is AI.”

For more information, please visit <https://www.onegiantleap.com>

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