



Inaugural Women in Motorsports Conference. Photo credit: Taneli Niinimäki

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## Northumbria academic discusses breaking down gender stereotypes in sport volunteering

[Dr Lindsay Findlay-King](#), Principal Lecturer in Sport Management at Northumbria University is taking centre stage at esteemed international events to speak about developing female volunteering in sport.

Two international events focusing on participation and inclusion in sport have recently invited Lindsay, who is also Chair of [UK Sports Volunteering Research Network](#), to discuss ways of attracting more female volunteers in

sport.

In August, the [International Motorcycling Federation](#) (FIM) and [International Automobile Federation](#) (FIA) jointly hosted the first ever [joint conference on “Women in Motorsports”](#).

The conference was held in the Lahti region of Finland and brought together almost 40 speakers and 100 participants from 26 countries representing all continents. It was designed to celebrate inspirational women and men involved in motorsports who have actively promoted the presence of women in motorsports.

With keynote speeches, empowering panel discussions and workshops, the conference acted as a platform to address issues surrounding motorsports and to share inspiring stories.

In addition to highlighting the experiences of successful motorsport women – including Spanish MotoE racer María Herrera and Alfa Romeo Formula 1 Test Driver Tatiana Caldéron from Columbia – the conference involved a wide range of international experts.

The aim was to provide tangible solutions to several hot topics, such as how to attract more volunteers, how the federations should support competitors preparing their post-racing career – or help them manage their dual career. How athletes should consider themselves as brands and obtain sponsors, or what the future of motorsport looks like in terms of sustainability and E-Series, was also debated.

Lindsay was selected to take part in a panel discussion which addressed ways of recruiting, retaining and rewarding volunteers and showcased how to reach an untapped pool of volunteers: women. The Northumbria academic presented alongside Jenni Siren, New Leaders Project Coordinator for the International Olympic Committee, Finland, Susanne Neuhäuser, Speedway Referee and FIM Women’s Commission’s Volunteers Project Leader, and Paula Arevalo Lopez, Director of Spanish Motorcycling Federation Women’s Commission.

Reflecting on her experience at the conference, Lindsay said: “It was an honour to present at the inaugural first Women in Motorsports Conference on

the invitation of FIM. People were keen to know what UK research evidence tells us about the way women behave and are motivated differently in relation to sports volunteering and the barriers they may face. There was a lively discussion about supporting organisations to engage female volunteers, as volunteers are more than twice as likely to be male within sport.”

On 13 September, Lindsay will also be part of an expert panel discussion in a series of talks hosted by the Sports Volunteering Research Network (SVRN) in collaboration with Volunteer Scotland at the Solheim Cup – the largest contest in world golf for women.

In line with the Scottish Government’s Volunteering for All: outcomes framework, Solheim is aiming to be the most inclusive golf major. To achieve this mission, Volunteer Scotland is bringing its “CommUnity Bubble” – described as a fun, safe, and neutral space to enjoy and build relationships and talk about community spirit, to the event.

The CommUnity Bubble will hold a programme of “[bubble talks](#)” in partnership with the SVRN to facilitate conversations about increasing volunteer participation and inclusion. As Chair of the SVRN, Lindsay will participate in a bubble talk entitled ‘Women as Volunteers in Sport’ that will discuss research and practice relating to women as sport volunteers.

For more information about the Women in Motorsports Conference, please visit: [www.fim-women.com](http://www.fim-women.com)

Tickets for the Volunteer Scotland Bubble Talks at the Solheim Cup can be reserved [here](#). For more information about ‘bubble talks’ and what Volunteer Scotland aims to achieve, please see this [TFN article](#) by Volunteer Scotland Chief Executive, George Thomson.

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