

Sophie Nelson
Travel and Partnerships Manager, International
Avis Budget Group



Election Address

Throughout my career in travel, I am motivated and inspired to help customers fulfil their dreams by going away on holiday and having authentic experiences. I am proud to work in an industry that plays a vital role in global economies and that contributes to a more sustainable world.

As a future leader of the industry, I want to be able to affect positive change, with my key driving forces being:

- 1. Attracting and retaining talent within the industry, especially since the loss of so much expertise in the last few years. I have a particular focus on bringing young people into the industry to allow new views and ways of working to be introduced.*
- 2. Ensuring companies have a tangible D&I policy to ensure the BAME community is represented and propelled into senior roles, companies must act rather than just communicating policies. Without this, as an industry we are not able to adapt and make effective key decisions without a younger and more diverse workforce.*

As an ITT board member, I would represent the views of those starting their careers as leaders in the industry, to promote opportunity and diversity within ITT. This opportunity will allow ITT to have more diverse views and allow those I represent to affect real positive change within travel. ITT plays a vital role in creating a platform for people within the industry to discuss these topics and allows for people to network and share best practices. I would therefore relish the opportunity to become an ITT board member to be at the forefront of the industry and champion change.

Biography

I began my career at Avis Budget Group with a university placement role as travel and partnerships coordinator, where my passion for the travel industry was born and I was quickly promoted. I have been recognised in the industry as 'one to watch' having won a number of awards (TTG 30 under 30 and GBTA Top 50 Women in Travel).

In my role as Travel and Partnerships Manager, International, I am responsible for the UK and Scandinavian travel trade, including all travel agents and tour operators. I manage the sales journey through onboarding new partners, commercial negotiations and all sales activity in market. I am dedicated to support our agents and strive to be the best supplier partner we can be. I understand the importance of travel agents now more than ever and see this as a real opportunity to grow our industry even further. I am excited to be able to learn and develop within the industry and to be able to make an impact and affect change in my role.

My success in the industry has been propelled through having amazing mentors who have aided me in my career to date. Thus, igniting my passion to encourage young people into the industry and encouraging diversity and inclusion into organisations.

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