

AUTOMOTIVE

Bentley women in leadership program returns, expands to Saudi Arabia

March 9, 2023



Dar Al Hekma University in Saudi Arabia will join the program this year, sending one of its female students to Bentley headquarters this summer. Image credit: Bentley Motors

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

British automaker Bentley Motors is offering a new crop of female students the opportunity to become tomorrow's leaders, an invitation that now extends to a new country.

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Now in its second year, the brand's Extraordinary Women initiative will pair young women studying tech, engineering, business and design with mentors from Bentley's team who have demonstrated professional success in the same fields. The program now extends to women students at the Dar Al Hekma University in Saudi Arabia.

"Pursuing a constructive and mutually beneficial diversity policy is an essential part of our Beyond100 strategy and, in particular, our goal to achieve 30 per cent diverse management by 2025," said Karen Lange, member of the board for human resources at **Bentley Motors**, in a statement.

"Our bespoke Extraordinary Women program is a key component of this, and one that we are proud to be implementing across an increasing number of countries," she said.

This initiative lends itself to the brand's larger mission to increase diversity and inclusion within its own four walls by encouraging these students to pursue careers in automotive and STEM.

One on one

Now that Ms. Lange has sent out the call for new mentees via a virtual event held March 6, Bentley will work with partnering universities to find the single best representative from each to participate in the program.

These universities include newly enrolled Dar Al Hekma University in Saudi Arabia, as well as several leading across the United Kingdom. Once chosen, the representative from each university will receive individualized mentoring from a member of Bentley's professional team before heading to Bentley headquarters in June.



The students in the Extraordinary Women program will work on real projects with members of the Bentley team. Image credit: Bentley Motors

There, the future leaders will spend a week applying what their mentor has taught them to real-time projects, working as part of the Bentley team.

If Bentley's recent hiring boom is any indication, the mentees are on the right career track.

In January, the automaker opened 200 new positions, many of which called for engineers and tech professionals, in an effort to debut five new electric vehicles by 2030 ([see story](#)).

This initiative furthers the brand's Beyond100 mission twofold: it hastens the objective of becoming end-to-end carbon neutral by 2030 and, by increasing the workforce, increases opportunities to be inclusive.

The brand has already demonstrated its ability to meet its environmental goals.

In July, the brand became the first company to be certified as "Net Zero Plastic to Nature" by emissions reduction organization South Pole ([see story](#)).