

Women in Computing Panel, Edinburgh, 8th May 2013

On Wednesday 8th May approximately 55 women and a few men gathered in the Informatics Forum for the first Scottish screening of *she++: The Documentary* (<http://sheplusplus.stanford.edu/film/>). This 12 minute film has been directed by two female undergraduates at Stanford University and is intended to encourage and inspire other women to become involved in computer science. The she++ group at Stanford calls itself a community for innovative women in technology, and organizes an annual symposium for college and high school students and industry professionals on what it is to be a woman working in technology. The participants at the Edinburgh event came from a number of SICSA institutions and ranged from undergraduates to professors.

After a brief introduction by Bonnie Webber, who had organized the screening, the audience watched the short film attentively. A lot was packed into the 12 minute film, which included a number of different perspectives from high-school students who are just enjoying their first successes with technology to industry leaders such as Jocelyn Goldfein of Facebook.

For the Edinburgh screening to initiate the discussion after the film we had assembled a panel of women with a range of different experiences. The panel consisted of:

- Sathya Smith, Head of Partner Solutions at Google, London
- Marcia Rankin, Head of Health Information Services, NHS24, NHS Scotland
- Jane Hillston, Professor and Director of the LFCS, School of Informatics, University of Edinburgh
- Lexi Birch, Research Associate, ILCC, School of Informatics, University of Edinburgh

Each of the panelists was asked to give her first response to the documentary before questions and comments from the audience were invited.

There was a lively discussion with reaction to the film from both the panel and the audience. Many of us felt that it would be great if all young women in S1/S2 in schools across Scotland could see the film before making their subject choices for S3.

After the discussion there was a delicious afternoon tea and further opportunity for the audience to interact with the panelists and each other.