

## [Young Tech and Digital Professional of the Year 2022](#)

### Breadcrumb

1. [Home](#) /
2. [Print](#) /
3. [Pdf](#) /
4. [Node](#) /
5. [Entity Print](#)

### Insight navigation

- [Latest insights](#)
- [Latest news](#)
- [Articles](#)
- [Case studies](#)

[Download PDF](#)

Dec 2022

## Young Tech and Digital Professional of the Year 2022

In November, Senior Technology Consultant [Keira Hall](#) won the Tech and Digital award at the North East Young Professionals Awards, and we are so proud of her success. We wanted to find out more about her and her career journey so far that led to this accolade...

Categories Technology Consulting

Dec 2022

- 
- 
- 



### [Keira Hall](#)

Solutions Architect

### Email

[keira.hall@waterstons.com](mailto:keira.hall@waterstons.com)



[Keira](#) studied Information Technology for Business at Northumbria University, even though she originally planned to study psychology, maths and science. "I hated every minute of it", she said. "I changed to IT and business, and after hearing Andrew Turnbull from Northumbria University speak about the course, I was hooked.

"I was 18 years old and had no clue where I wanted to be or what I wanted to do, but hearing his passion, and later my tutor Emma Jane Phillips' stories of working in bunkers and needing maximum MOD security clearance, I just knew I had to become a consultant."

As part of her studies, Keira joined Waterstons for a year in industry placement, before joining us full time after graduation.

#### • What made you choose your placement at Waterstons?

After winning a bursary event with Waterstons (pulling together some slides on Edward Snowden and his whistleblowing on the NSA, totally showing my inner nerd and spending the £500 winnings in New Look with my staff discount), I was invited back to take place in a placement event.

I left thinking I hadn't got the job and was quite disappointed. I had been offered a position as a business analyst elsewhere as well as a placement with Waterstons, and I didn't know which to pick.

Waterstons had my heart; two people I ended up working closely with sold me the Waterstons dream seven years ago, and I've been hooked ever since.

- **What did you learn over your placement year with the business?**

My placement year was invaluable, and it helped me learn that while you work for a company, you succeed for your line manager. I'm fortunate that in my time here I have had some amazing role models, mentors and line managers who have inspired me and provided advice where it was needed. Nobody tells you what to do, but they help guide you in the right direction.

Another thing was that you don't need to know all the answers.

I also learned some less pleasant things. People look little 5'2" blonde girls up and down, not expecting them to know, do or say much. I also learned how to prove them wrong.

- **What was your first big project when coming back from placement?**

I remember one morning [Leanne](#) asking me if she could have a word and my heart sank, wondering what on earth I'd done to be in trouble.

It turned out quite the opposite, and I was asked if I wanted to go to London to work on a merge and acquisition project. I'd never even left Newcastle, never mind gone to London - I remember calling my mum to tell her and ask how to get there!

The 'Dream Team' working on the Scotts/Evergreen divestment taught me so much and I realised that Tech Solutions was where I wanted to be. It wasn't as glamorous - I was tracing cables in buildings full of manure and going back to my hotel room with it up my nose; I'm sure I could still smell it for weeks after I came home.

The team were honestly second to none and I wouldn't be where I am today without them - they helped me find what I wanted to do with my career as I was a little lost until this point. That's the beauty of Waterstons, you have the freedom and opportunity to try something different to find your passion.

- **What is the most important thing you've learned through your time with Waterstons so far?**

That there aren't many companies like us; we're so unique in the market and that's down to the people we employ. We have some amazing people who genuinely care about each other, their wellbeing and making a difference to our customers. That's hard to come by.

- **PLEASE share some of your stories from your time with Waterstons...**

The 15.56 train on platform 4 from Newcastle doesn't always go to London Kings Cross. Sometimes it goes to York and terminates. Sometimes your London train overtakes you when you're on said wrong train, and little legs don't run very fast.

Health and Safety is your top priority....

"Oh there's an access point over there, somewhere, up you go" [scales ladder]

"You have to go onto that Vessel, by climbing up that rope on the side of the boat."

"Can you swim? We'd like you to get on this boat to get onto this vessel in the middle of the Humber" (that's where I drew the line!)

- **What have you learned about yourself since joining Waterstons?**

We need more women in tech - there are nowhere near enough of us. We're different - we see things differently.

- **What is the next step in your career?**

I'd like to move away from full time delivery, it's amazing how busy we have been over the past five years, but learning is the next step for me along with some personal development.

There's so much to learn, especially since taking up a leadership role. I need to pick an area within the department and mould that into something great. I'd love to put my stamp on something, what that is yet, I'm not quite sure...

- **Where do you want to be in 5 years?**

I've always said I'd love to become a technical project manager, but as the time's gone on and I've worked on so many M&A projects and really found that I LOVE the due diligence piece, when you're acting as a detective on behalf of the buyer, trying to understand the business model.

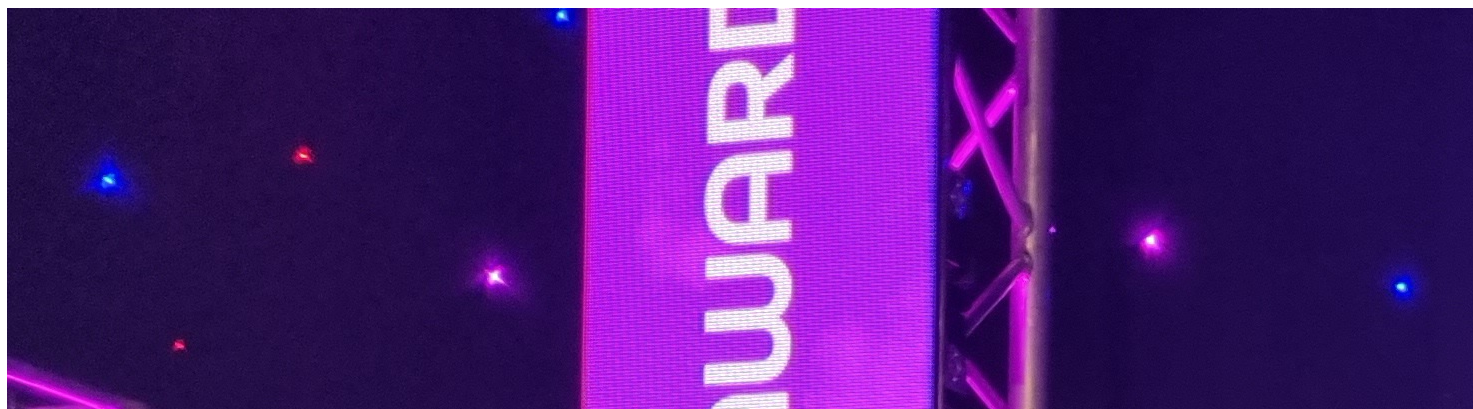
If you asked me 5 years ago, where did I think I would be right now, no way would I have said I'd be in the position I am today, running around the country, and flying overseas for work, I honestly didn't see that. I love that I've been able to add value and a little bit of sparkle into the tech industry here in the northeast.

- **Who do you look up to personally and professionally?**

I've been very fortunate in my time so far that I've had two exceptional line managers, who honestly, I'd not be where I am today if it wasn't for them.

One of the directors also showed me the ropes very early on, and I've got a special place in my heart for them. The guidance they've provided over the years is amazing, and again, I don't quite think you'd get that anywhere else.

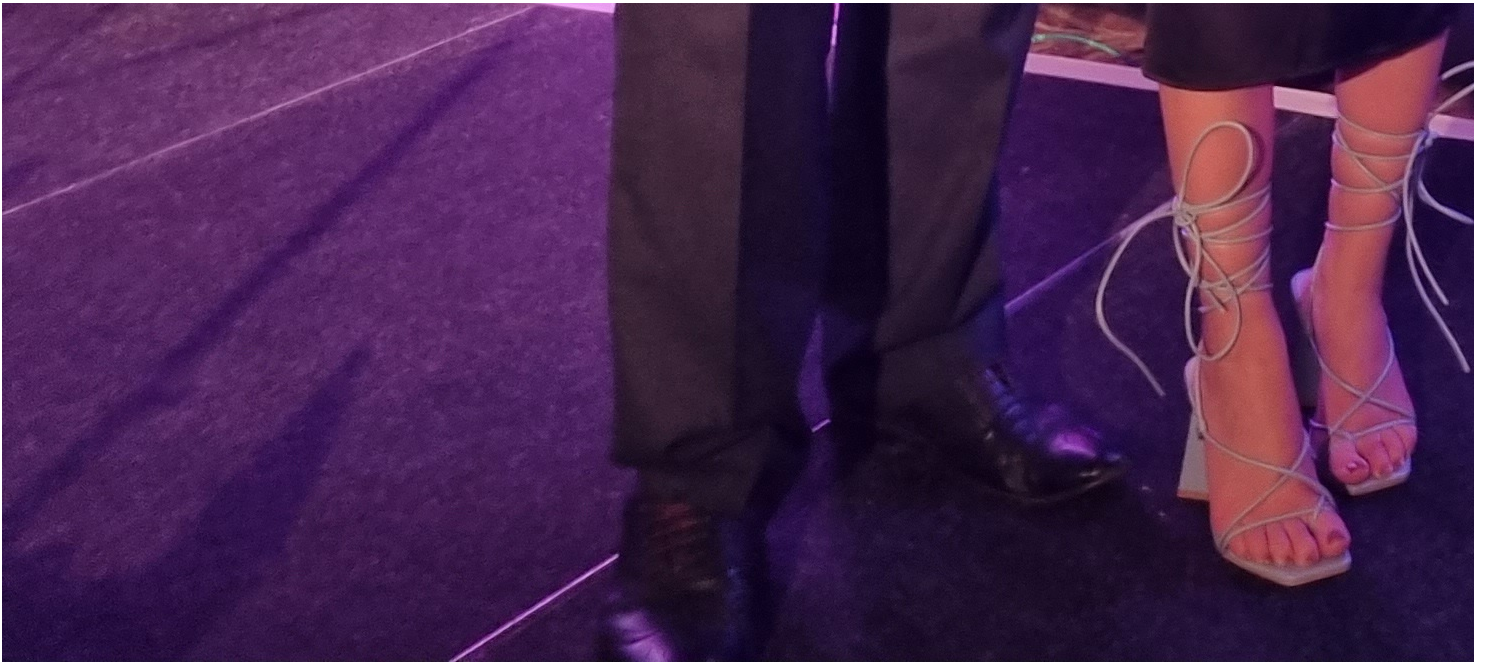
Here you can view our [technology consulting services](#).











<https://waterstons.com/print/pdf/node/8455>