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WHITE INK ARCHITECTS  
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MORE WOMEN TO JOIN THE  
INDUSTRY...

# Joan McCoy is named Best Woman Architect

Joan McCoy, Director of Belfast-based White Ink Architects, has won a major European award for her work in the industry.

Joan was recently named as the 'Best Woman Architect' at the highly prestigious European Women in Construction & Engineering Awards at a glittering event at Park Lane Hotel, London, which brought together over 250 leading European executives in the world of construction, engineering and architecture. Panels comprising 21 independent judges, from various high-calibre backgrounds, selected the 13 winners from over 50 finalists from all over Europe – with Joan showcasing that Northern Ireland talent has a lot to offer on the global stage!

The European Women in Construction & Engineering Awards were created to recognise the contributions of female professionals within these sectors and to encourage more women to consider careers in these industries by creating role models amongst the finalists and winners. They honour women who can be considered pioneers within construction and engineering and also recognise the emerging leaders of



Joan McCoy, Director, White Ink Architects (left) is presented with the Best Woman Architect Award.

these industries.

Even being named on the shortlist was a major achievement. After being nominated by a colleague, Joan then had to go through a rigorous judging process and interview against other women from a number of prestigious and leading UK and European practices.

In the end, it was Joan's overall approach that won the judges over, as they recognised not only her professional work as an architect but also her ability to inspire those around her - both staff and others within the industry. This includes an active role in architectural education through the local universities and Joan also partakes in STEMnet and the CITB Construction Ambassador programme with school children, teenagers and students. She is also proactive in the work of the Royal Society of Ulster Architects (currently acting as Honorary Secretary) and is involved in various other steering groups.

Aine Glackin from White Ink Architects, nominated Joan for the award and she said, "This accolade is a testament to Joan's fervour, motivation and 'can-do' attitude, as well as her unparalleled dedication to

our practice, the architectural profession, education and the construction industry. "The success of her architectural projects is just one facet of an inspirational architect. As well as acting as an exemplary role model and mentor to staff within the practice, encouraging their development and learning, she also actively works to encourage more people to join the industry."

As ever, Joan is humble about her achievements and simply sees this as a catalyst to encourage more women into architecture and the wider construction industry. She said, "I am honoured to win against such excellent competition. This is really going to help me demonstrate to young women considering their career, that construction and architecture are great fields to work in and that women can compete at the highest level and succeed.

"We have a small company where everyone's contribution is valued and where we have recently encouraged younger architects to become STEM and Construction Ambassadors.

Whether it is taking on challenges in their work; encouraging new entrants to architecture or becoming active in professional bodies, winning this award will help me demonstrate to younger architects the benefits of making the most of the opportunities they have to make a contribution to the practice and the wider industry."

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