

## Niamh Donnelly

Co-Founder and Chief Technology  
Officer of Akara

*Building the Next Generation of Health-  
care Technology*



### Biography

Niamh Donnelly's career is defined by pushing the boundaries of what robotics and artificial intelligence can achieve in real-world healthcare environments. As co-founder and Chief Technology Officer of Akara, a spin-out from the Robotics and Innovation Lab at Trinity College Dublin, she has spent the past decade building intelligent systems that move beyond theory and into hospitals - designing technologies that improve efficiency and support frontline healthcare staff. With a background in mechanical engineering and a master's degree in computer science specializing in machine learning and AI, her work sits at the intersection of deep technical innovation and practical deployment in complex clinical settings - that is, bringing robots from the lab, into the hospital

A compelling and globally recognised speaker, Niamh brings a pragmatic lens to the rapidly evolving AI and Robotics landscape, focusing on what it truly takes to bring innovation into "the real world". She has delivered keynote talks on some of the world's leading stages, including Web Summit, WIRED Health, Sifted Summit, and United Nations forums, and has also been invited to speak at internal events for organisations including Siemens, Accenture, Mouser, and KPMG on innovation and entrepreneurship. Known for cutting through hype, she emphasises the importance of deploying AI and robotics safely, reliably, and at scale, particularly in healthcare environments where trust is paramount.

### Topics & Books

*AI in Healthcare*

*Robotics*

*Entrepreneurship*

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Her contributions to the field have been widely recognized. Niamh is a recipient of the European Commission's Rising Innovator Prize, awarded to exceptional female innovators under 35, and is a laureate of the European Innovation Council. Her work has been featured twice on TIME Magazine's Top 100 Inventions list (2021 & 2025), and her robot has been featured on the cover of TIME magazine. Her work has also been featured by TechCrunch, Bloomberg, CNN, and Forbes. Niamh has been named among the Top 50 Women in Robotics by RoboHub and recognized on the Flybridge and XFactor Ventures Top 100 Women in AI list, reflecting her global impact across both disciplines.

Beyond her technical and entrepreneurial work, Niamh is a strong advocate for diversity in science and technology. She has been appointed by the European Innovation Council as an ambassador at high-profile events, including the Women and Girls in STEM Forum in Brussels, and was recently invited to mentor young female entrepreneurs through the European Union Women Leadership Programme. Her leadership and expertise have also been recognized by the Irish government, which has engaged her as a technology ambassador on international trade missions to New York, Paris, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia, among others.

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