



The Big Bang
UK Young Scientists & Engineers Fair



POSITIVE CONNECTIONS



The Background

The numbers speak – indeed – shout for themselves: the UK needs more skilled engineers and technicians, around 186,000 a year for the next eight years; salaries are very good across all levels; and both immediate and longer term employment prospects are good. And yet the UK remains bottom of the European league in terms of the number of women in engineering.

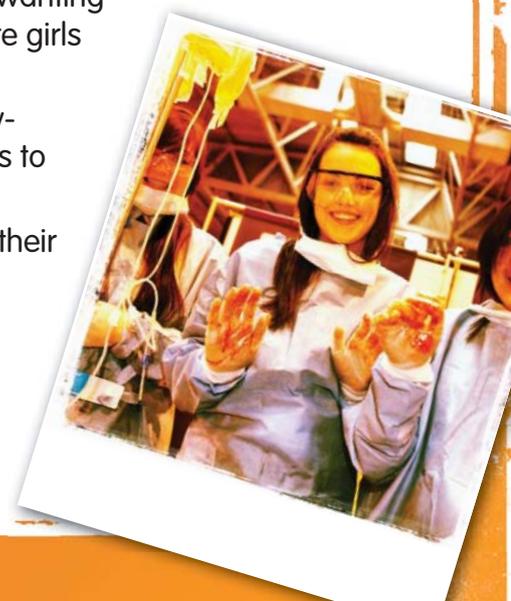
As the traditional role of the engineer changes, a diverse team will be essential, to optimise design, deliver innovation, engineer and manufacture products, integrate systems, and provide a first class customer experience. This is an amazing and exciting opportunity to attract a younger and more diverse generation where new ways of thinking are required, and girls have a vital part to play.

The Big Bang Fair presents a fantastic opportunity to reach a diverse audience of young people, with as many girls as boys, a wide ethnic mix and 1 in 10 young people living in areas with the lowest participation in higher education coming to the Fair.

This guide, developed for The Big Bang Fair by the Women's Engineering Society (WES) focuses on how to engage with girls visiting the Fair. It looks at ways of ensuring young people get the most from their visit and helps ensure their enthusiasm lasts beyond the great day out we know they'll have, and influences the choices they make in the future.

When girls approach your stand:

- Be welcoming and friendly, and BE NORMAL
- Speak mostly to the girl, not the adult
- But don't ignore the adult – they are important too
- Inspire them with what you do
- Point out how their talents will be key to our success in engineering in future
- Ask them questions about what they're interested in
- Relate your work to what they will know about
- Make your messages positive
- Sell engineering as a great career - be persuasive
- Give real life examples, and explain the societal benefits and relevance of what you do
- Have a diverse range of people on your stand - demonstrate your company's diversity in terms of a mix of gender, ethnicity and the routes they've taken to a career with you
- Be specific about wanting to encourage more girls into engineering
- Don't just use 'boy-focused' examples to explain concepts
- Be positive about their ability to succeed





Inspire, Enthuse, Encourage

Avoid:

- Jargon
- The rugby-scrum approach to greeting girls to the stand – it is intimidating
- Making their interest feel unusual
- The use of the negative statistics on numbers of women in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM)
- Focusing on the confident girls at the expense of the quiet ones
- Making them feel uncomfortable with too much attention
- Suggesting that girls couldn't or wouldn't want to go into STEM careers
- Patronising
- Stereotyping

Pre GCSE Group (below 16)

- Inspire them!
- Encourage their interest – they won't know what they want to do yet but you can sow the seed in their minds
- Link your work to something they are likely to be learning about in school - ask them
- Stress the importance of continuing with science and maths – it keeps their options open

Post GCSE Group (16-19)

- Encourage them!
- Give examples of real people and real jobs within your company
- Make them think 'that could be me'
- Talk about apprenticeships as well as the University route
- Tell them where they can get further careers information
- Be ready to explain what degree/apprenticeship they would need to get into the careers you are describing
- Mention the financial benefits of a career in STEM

Next Steps

- Let visitors know where to go to find out more about your company and what it does, including:
 - » Opportunities to come and visit
 - » How they get in touch with you e.g. to organise a visit to their school
 - » Work experience/summer placement opportunities
 - » Links to social media where you share your stories
 - » Resources that will help them learn more
- Encourage visitors to visit the Careers Hub on the showfloor, where they can talk to advisers and pick up information about a wide range of STEM careers
- Remind visitors to keep hold of and refer to the website links on their lanyard after the Fair
- Visit the Women's Engineering Society (WES) website www.wes.org.uk and WISE website www.wisecampaign.org.uk for more information about ways to inspire women as scientists and engineers

Girls of this age have the world at their feet - **anything is possible.**

We need to show them how exciting a career in engineering can be, **encourage** them to see themselves in that role, and then maintain their interest beyond The Fair so that they retain their **enthusiasm.**

This flyer has been produced by WES in association with WISE and with the kind support of Atkins and Siemens.