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**Encouraging the next generation of female engineers**

According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, 35 per cent of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) students in higher education in the UK are women. Taking place annually on 23 June, International Women in Engineering Day is an awareness campaign to raise the profile of women in engineering and focus attention on the amazing career opportunities available to girls in this exciting industry. To show its support for the campaign, global engineering technologies company, [Renishaw](https://www.renishaw.com/en/renishaw-enhancing-efficiency-in-manufacturing-and-healthcare--1030?utm_source=Stone+Junction&utm_medium=BP&utm_campaign=REC580), speaks to Lucy Spiteri-Beale, Early Careers and STEM Outreach Tutor/Technician at Renishaw about how the industry can encourage more students to pursue STEM careers. Lucy began her career at Renishaw as a Degree Software Apprentice and is based at Renishaw’s New Mills Headquarters site in Gloucestershire, UK.

**Why did you become an engineer?**

Growing up, my father and grandad were really into technology, so I understood a lot about computers from a very young age. During a college A-Level taster day, a teacher showed us a video of the careers you could go into with computer science. I fell in love with the wide range of jobs that you could do, including software engineering, and that is where my passion began.

When I was looking into attending university, my dad worked for Renishaw and suggested that I consider apprenticeships. My school was very orientated towards university degrees, so this wasn’t something I had considered before. I chose to do a software apprenticeship with Renishaw because it gave me the freedom to have a job and get a degree at the same time, which has led me to where I am in my career now.

**Why did you move from software engineering into education outreach?**

I have always loved working with children and even considered becoming a teacher for a while. During my first week at Renishaw, I was introduced to the STEM and Women in Engineering ambassador roles that were available to us. I immediately applied because it gave me the opportunity to work with children and become an engineering role model to young girls. You can’t be what you can’t see, so I wanted to be someone visible to the next generation of female engineers.

I decided to move into education outreach full-time because the ambassador work is what I loved most. I use my engineering knowledge and coding skills every day to come up with new activities to inspire the children. The best part is when children have the ‘lightbulb’ moment and are really engaged in the challenges they’ve been set.

**What advice would you give to girls considering a career in engineering?**

Engineering is commonly seen as a subject focusing on Maths and Physics, but I did A-Levels in English, Photography, Maths and Computer Science. People with many interests and from many disciplines can access an engineering career because engineering requires a wide variety of skills, such as creativity and problem solving. If you are making a product or software, it needs to work, but also to look good and inspire customers to use it - so an artistic, thoughtful, and creative approach is really helpful.

Finally, don’t let the idea of being the only woman in a room put you off. Many engineering firms, including Renishaw, are working hard to push past this stereotype and we are seeing far more women in the industry. I hope that in the future, this issue will be a thing of the past.

**What can schools do to encourage girls to consider an engineering career?**

Showing real-life female role models to girls will make their goals seem more achievable. Schools can get girls involved in workshops that provide them with exposure to engineering and the opportunity to learn more about different engineering topics, so they can find an area that they are interested in, and they can grow their passion from there. Engineering doesn’t just have to be in a laboratory or a dirty factory, the majority of things in our day-to-day life requires some form of engineering, so everyone can find their specific engineering interests.

Find out more about Renishaw’s education outreach programmes at [www.renishaw.com/education-outreach.](https://www.renishaw.com/en/education-outreach--34713?utm_source=Stone+Junction&utm_medium=BP&utm_campaign=REC580)

**-ENDS-**

**Notes to editors**

UK-based Renishaw is a world leading engineering technologies company, supplying products used for applications as diverse as jet engine and wind turbine manufacture, through to dentistry and brain surgery. It has over 5,000 employees located in the 36 countries where it has wholly owned subsidiary operations.

For the year ended June 2021 Renishaw recorded sales of £565.6 million of which 95% was due to exports. The company’s largest markets are China, the USA, Japan and Germany.

Throughout its history Renishaw has made a significant commitment to research and development, with historically between 13 and 18% of annual sales invested in R&D and engineering. The majority of this R&D and manufacturing of the company’s products is carried out in the UK.

The Company’s success has been recognised with numerous international awards, including eighteen Queen’s Awards recognising achievements in technology, export and innovation.

Further information at [www.renishaw.com](http://www.renishaw.com/)