

## Amey engineering challenge inspires girls into STEM

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To coincide with International Women in Engineering Day, Amey has launched its 2022 Challenge Cup. The Amey Challenge Cup is a series of competitions held across the UK to inspire girls from underprivileged areas into STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) careers.

While girls study STEM subjects at school just as much as boys (representing 48% of the total STEM entries at GCSE), there is an ongoing imbalance when it comes to undergraduate degrees and jobs in STEM industries.

Only 24% of the STEM workforce in the UK is female — and as a major engineering company, Amey is determined to improve gender diversity in the industry.

More than 300 girls from 14 schools across the UK will be taking part in events starting this week, with more running until September.

In the Challenge Cup, girls aged 13-15 are tasked with solving a real-life engineering problem. The girls look at all aspects of an engineering project including planning, budgeting, and managing risk, with the day culminating with teams presenting to a judging panel. More than 150 inspiring mentors from Amey, its clients and its partners will be there to guide and support the girls throughout the day.

Engineering problems to tackle include a bridge design and build based on a real-life example of a bridge collapse, and designing a school of the future.

Lisa Ingram, Head of Business Improvement at Amey, started and developed the Challenge Cup after seeing the lack of aspiration, opportunities and female role models during a visit to her daughter's school.

She said: "I've always been passionate about raising aspirations and ambition amongst girls and I've been so fortunate in being able to get support from Amey and my colleagues to run these amazing events. Every year I'm inspired by the imagination and enthusiasm of the girls we meet, and all of the volunteers get so much satisfaction from taking part. The energy and creativity from everyone involved never ceases to inspire me. It's been great to get back into it after two years off and we're already planning to be bigger and better next year."

Emily Davies, Director of Social Impact, Amey, added, "The Challenge Cup is a great way to open young people's eyes to all the possibilities in our sectors. We've already had some incredible events this week and I'm excited about the young talent that will now see the opportunities available to them in our industry."

Created five years ago as a careers involvement day by Birmingham-based Amey staff, the competition grew to include a number of schools in the West Midlands.

Building on the successes of previous years, schools from across the UK are taking part including in Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield, York, Barnsley, Kent, Liverpool, Belfast, Bristol, Caerphilly, Staffordshire, and Scotland.