

CASE STUDY

Women in STEM

Diversity and inclusion is a key focus for us at the Coal Authority and is at the heart of our people plan. Gender balance is a particular area of focus and we're committed to reducing our gender pay gap which, as we were originally populated by individuals from the largely male coal industry, has been particularly challenging for us. We're pleased to have seen an increase in the number of women joining us in more senior roles this year, including the appointment of our first female chief executive.

We've taken a number of practical steps this year including making changes to our recruitment approaches and investing in and supporting the great women already in our organisation with tailored development opportunities, role model talks and enabling a new women's network and women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) group.

The women in STEM group already has 30 members and their aims are:

- to support each other in their careers and development
- to link and network with other STEM organisations and groups
- to undertake outreach to schools and universities

To date the group has held a speed networking session where they got to know each other in a fun, informal environment away from their desks. They are making connections with other groups with similar aims and worked with the learning and development team to agree an outreach strategy.

They recently held an outreach session in conjunction with an engineering firm supporting a local academy work experience programme where students learnt to build marshmallow and spaghetti headstocks and experimented with rust. This raised awareness of the Coal Authority and the work we do in their local community, provided development for the team and support for the promising STEM women of the next generation.

We're not complacent. Our gender pay gap is far too large and we want to see significant and sustained improvement in it – and across the spectrum of diversity and inclusion. To achieve this we need to work harder, learn from others and listen to staff, customers and partners. You can read more in our first gender pay gap report at www.gov.uk/coalauthority.

