

# In her own words: Ruth Courtney

From what drives them to login every morning to advice they would give their 16-year-old selves, here are candid insights from some of the incredible women at the National Composites Centre (NCC) who help us build towards a brighter future.

## Meet Ruth Courtney Engineering Capability Lead Member, Women's Led Network

### Joining the NCC

After graduating from Loughborough University, Leicestershire with a degree in Design with Engineering Materials, I wanted to live in a city with good engineering opportunities. The NCC's graduate scheme was a great opportunity to try out different roles within composites engineering.

My grandma is my inspiration – she pioneered research into the history of midwifery and childbirth, while championing midwifery as a separate profession. We grandchildren were encouraged to push ourselves in both academia and work; and advised against aiming for any boxes outlined for us by stereotypes or societal expectations.



### What motivates my login

- The variety of work. There are different challenges week by week, and even more so since I have become a team lead.
- The opportunities for innovation and learning. R&D allows for imaginative problem solving, and I really enjoy working in this intersection between logical and creative work.
- The friendships and collaborative environment. There is such a broad skillset here, and people are keen to help each other and get involved.

### Allyship to me

It is a dedicated thought process: actively considering how different people may experience the world and situations, and allowing space for differences in opinions or approaches. A simple step could be enabling dedicated points within meetings to ensure everyone can – and feels comfortable to – voice their thoughts.

### Advice to my 16-year-old self

“ Find a balance between being outside your comfort zone, and picking opportunities that you enjoy. Most things are hard the first time, but keeping at them is how you learn, and find out where your strengths lie. Also, wear sunscreen! ”

### Making safety seen

Like allyship, safety has to be a dedicated thought process. By actively keeping safety at the forefront of our minds in everyday life and work, it becomes a natural priority. Making safety seen is being fearless in calling out risks, and sharing best practices across teams and the organisation.