

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN



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INTRODUCTION TO THE NATIONAL COMPOSITES CENTRE

OUR PEOPLE STRATEGY

Our vision is to be the world-leading authority on composites, bringing together and developing the best minds and the best technologies, to solve the world's most complex engineering challenges.

To deliver this vision we strive to create an innovative, entrepreneurial and inclusive culture with highly motivated and engaged teams that enable people to perform at their best.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion vision

Respecting difference, valuing potential, and leading an innovative and diverse future.

GENDER EQUALITY

Why specifically gender equality?

The NCC, as part of the High Value Manufacturing Catapult and alongside the wider national Catapult network, strive to be role models to the innovation community in all elements of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

Acknowledging that women are not only under-represented at the NCC, but also in the wider engineering industry, we believe that gender equality needs particular focus. The NCC has created a gender equality plan to help us achieve equality between all genders within the organisation. This plan will help raise awareness and develop an understanding of the issues surrounding gender equality in the workplace, enabling us to create a roadmap towards realising gender equality.

Ownership

We empower all NCC employees to be allies and demonstrate positive behaviour to cultivate an inclusive environment. The Senior Leadership team have fully endorsed and have accountability for the gender equality plan. Tim Rose, Chief Financial Officer, has been nominated as a senior manager to take the plan forward, with delegated responsibility of specific actions across the HR Team and other nominated stakeholders within the NCC.

SCOPE - WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Having reflected on the progress we have made over the last 10 years as an organisation, we now want to develop a roadmap for the future. This involves analysing our current landscape, identifying key focus areas and formulating tangible actions that will lead to gender equality.

An internal audit reviewed NCC demographics, alongside our policies and procedures, working practices, career progression, and reward.

DEMOGRAPHICS

We have an under representation of women colleagues in three areas: Engineering and Manufacturing, Technology, and Composites Business Unit. (14.3%). These statistics are close to external benchmarks when compared to wider engineering data (14.5% EngineeringUK.com). **Our women engineers are mostly clustered in the middle-tiered grades**, rather than in leadership positions.

We have a greater disparity of gender split within the technical engineering grades than professional grades, where an average of 51% are women.

There are positives when looking at the Senior Leadership team, with 27% of the directors being women.

We know there is a disproportionate under-representation within parts of the organisation, and we strive to promote diversity through career progression that reflects the NCC population. We also aim to ensure the diversity of our new hires and the NCC Leadership team and Board is higher than the industry average.



WORKING PRACTICES

The NCC has some flexible working practices, which have been taken up by both male (4%) and female employees (10%).

Continuing flexible working will be a significant benefit when we are looking to attract and retain women in the workplace. According to Timewise, 91% of women working full time either work flexibly or prefer to (Womenintech.co.uk).

We have recently implemented hybrid working practices, allowing a mixture of home and on-site working, as well additional flexibility for individual circumstances.



CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Within the last 12 months, 17% of the NCC's workforce changed role, and 23% of that cohort were women. This is relatively proportionate to NCC population, demonstrating a fair and consistent career development framework.



GENDER PAY REPORT

The NCC is proud to see the gender pay gap decreasing year on year. Our ambition is to continue this trajectory and ultimately eradicate the gender pay gap. Our most recent gender pay gap report can be found [on our website](#).

GENDER EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

The NCC is committed to fostering a work environment that values all talent, and where we empower employees to be authentic. We have set specific gender equality actions, split into key areas.

With only 16% of engineering students being women (STEMwomen.co.uk), our actions are not only activities we can control within the NCC, but also aim to influence the external market, and inspire the next generation of women engineers.

Specific initiatives, dedicated resources and timeframes have been aligned to actions and measures for us to be best positioned in accomplishing our objectives (further detail can be found on our EDI Roadmap).



RECRUITMENT AND CAREER MANAGEMENT

Objectives

- Aspire to increase the number of female employees within our technology grades higher than industry average by 2025
- Review, adapt and develop career progression activities with the intention of diversifying the talent pool in our technology grades and leadership positions
- Greater focus on high potential talent, the development of succession plans, and the review/creation of career development activities to inspire female employees and the next generation

Action / Measures

- STEM Strategy and a programme of engagement activities to attract and educate female students
- EDI training programme for all employees, including specific modules for managers and leaders
- Review of recruitment process and role descriptions
- Create and embed an inclusivity group, with champions and ambassadors discussing barriers and opportunities for protected groups across NCC
- Communication on career development pathways, role models and mentoring
- Continual investment in high potential career pathways



DATA MONITORING

Objectives

- Collate and analyse EDI statistics of NCC alongside external benchmarks on a regular basis to assist with understanding landscape and drive future initiatives

Action / Measures

- Measuring key metrics to analyse Diversity and Inclusion across the organisation
- Survey the workforce on inclusivity in NCC
- Legislative reporting, including Gender Pay reporting, analysis of progress year on year



LEADERSHIP

Objectives

- Continue gender equality/EDI commitment from Leadership team with regular review and feedback on our EDI objectives
- Review, adapt and develop career progression activities with the aim to increase gender balance of our leadership community and Board to higher than industry average by 2025
- Review, adapt and develop career progression activities with the aim to increase diversity in all leadership roles across the NCC

Action / Measures

- Senior Leadership lead dedicated to EDI
- Greater communication on career development pathways, role models and mentoring
- Continual investment in high potential career pathways
- EDI training programme for all employees, including specific modules for managers and leaders



PAY AND BENEFITS

Objectives

- Continue to monitor and report on equal pay and gender pay
- Continue flexible approach to working practices – work life balance and organisational culture

Action / Measures

- Equal pay audit
- Gender pay reporting annual basis looking at mean and median pay gaps
- Review flexible working in NCC as part of our Employer Value Proposition
- Implementation of trial hybrid working model



CULTURE AND INCLUSIVITY

Objectives

- Drive new and innovative ways to revolutionise inclusivity in every element of our workplace
- Develop and nurture employee networks with our regional partners, customers and suppliers to inspire and encourage everyone to bring their whole self to work

Action / Measures

- Survey and engage the workforce to understand known barriers within the workplace to have annual goals for NCC being an 'Inclusive' place to work
- Create and embed an inclusivity group, with champions and ambassadors discussing barriers and opportunities for protected groups across NCC
- Implementation of hybrid working model



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT, AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Objectives

- Increase overall awareness of general equality across NCC
- Work with other HVMC to share best practice and experiences with gender equality
- Establish Inclusivity Group to encourage feedback and communication on EDI across the organisation
- Continue to develop a STEM strategy, promoting internal and external learning activities to encourage the development of female engineers

Action / Measures

- EDI training programme for all employees, including specific modules for managers and leaders
- Communicate regular updates of EDI activities to whole employee base
- Create and embed an inclusivity group, with champions and ambassadors discussing barriers and opportunities for protected groups across NCC
- Greater communication on career development pathways, role models and mentoring
- Sharing best practices across the Catapult
- STEM Strategy and a programme of engagement activities to attract and educate female students



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following policies have been reviewed and will continue to be monitored to ensure we are up to date with our practices to encourage inclusivity and equality.

- D&I Policy
- Reward Policy
- Flexible working and Home-working Policy
- Recruitment Processes
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Domestic Violence and Gender based violence policy

EVALUATION, GOVERNANCE AND CONTINUAL MONITORING

The measures provided for in the Gender Equality plan will be regularly evaluated and monitored by the NCC to ensure their full commitment and to highlight any opportunities for improvement.

This monitoring will be led by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead, and supported by the Head of HR, the HR team and the Senior Leadership Team.

People data will be analysed on an annual basis, along with legislative reporting of gender pay and equal pay. Reports will be published on the NCC website.

