

Powering Progress: Driving DEI and the future of energy





“The energy transition is not just a technological challenge – it’s a human one. Its success will ultimately depend on the diversity of minds, skills and voices driving it.”



The transformation of the energy ecosystem will depend on bringing every voice to the table.

The UK’s energy sector faces a defining challenge and opportunity on the path to net zero. By 2050, an estimated **400,000 new roles** will be needed to deliver the transition: **260,000 newly created positions** and **140,000 replacements** for those leaving the workforce¹.

To meet this demand, the sector must not only build capacity but also ensure it reflects the diversity of the communities it serves.

The 2025 Annual State of the Nation report shows encouraging progress in gender representation at Board, Executive Director, and middle management levels. However, progress at leadership level has stalled.

For POWERful Women to achieve its target of at least 40% female representation in middle management and leadership roles by 2030, the sector must both retain existing female talent and expand opportunity, adding, on average, one more female Board member by the end of 2025, five female leadership team members and 38 female middle managers by 2030.

The persistent gender and inclusion gap is no longer merely a social equity issue, it is a strategic transformation risk. In the race toward a just energy transition, we cannot afford to leave half of our talent, creativity and leadership potential untapped. Closing this gap is not only the right thing to do; it is essential for resilience, innovation and sustainable growth. The transformation of the energy ecosystem will depend on bringing every voice to the table.

Through the POWERful Women Leaders Coalition, we see competitors collaborating to address these challenges and identify shared opportunities to accelerate progress, both within their organisations and across the wider sector.

Ultimately, it is people not systems who will drive real change. This report highlights the actions and initiatives of the Leaders Coalition members who are taking tangible steps to create more inclusive, equitable workplaces amidst the challenges of sector growth, a transitioning workforce and emerging technologies.

As a coalition, we remain committed to challenging ourselves and the wider industry to embed diversity, equity, and inclusion at the heart of our business strategies as we enter a new era of energy transformation.

Now is the moment to act – to lead boldly, embed diversity and inclusion at the heart of business, and build the energy future society needs.

Cordi O’Hara OBE
Chair, POWERful Women
Leaders Coalition

1. The Net Zero Race, National Grid

“

“Shaping an energy sector that reflects the society it serves — innovative, equitable and future-focused.”

POWERful Women Leaders Coalition

A unique collaboration

When leaders lead with conviction, change accelerates. A unique collaboration of energy organisations united by a shared belief that diversity is not a target, it's a value that drives performance and progress. Each leader's commitment is more than a pledge; it's a public promise to be visible, accountable and vocal in advancing inclusion.



centrica

drax



ENGIE



nationalgrid



ofgem

Orsted

RWE



subsea 7

wood.

01

Powering Progress: A year of diversity, equity & inclusion in UK energy

Progress begins with people

Every step toward DEI brings new energy, new ideas and new possibilities for the sector's future.



This moment is about more than metrics. It is about momentum.



CHAPTER 01

People are the true power behind progress

2025 has marked a turning point for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the UK energy sector. In a volatile global landscape, with rollbacks of DEI initiatives in the United States shaping headlines and influencing multinationals, UK companies are largely charting a different course. They are adapting, not retreating.

Investor and shareholder pressure, combined with the urgent need to build diverse talent pipelines for the energy transition, is driving companies to reframe their commitments. What we are witnessing is not the dilution of ambition but its transformation: organisations embedding inclusion more deeply into strategy, linking it to business value and ensuring programmes in recruitment, development and retention deliver real change.

This moment is about more than metrics. It is about momentum. Behind every target are people – women advancing into leadership, colleagues who feel seen and valued, teams whose diversity sparks innovation. These are the stories that matter, and they show that diversity and inclusion are not side projects, but central to powering the UK’s energy future.



PHOTO: PRIDE IN ENERGY SUPPLIED BY NATIONAL GRID VENTURES



“My focus has always been on driving sustainable growth and bringing to life our purpose: ‘energising a greener, fairer future’. Diversity and inclusion are a key part of this, and it’s why we’ve driven forward initiatives like the Centrica X POWERful Women Conference and supported Pride to champion inclusion.”

Chris O'Shea
Group Chief Executive
Centrica plc

71%

of respondents expressed concern that political debates around diversity could undermine progress on inclusion in the UK energy sector.

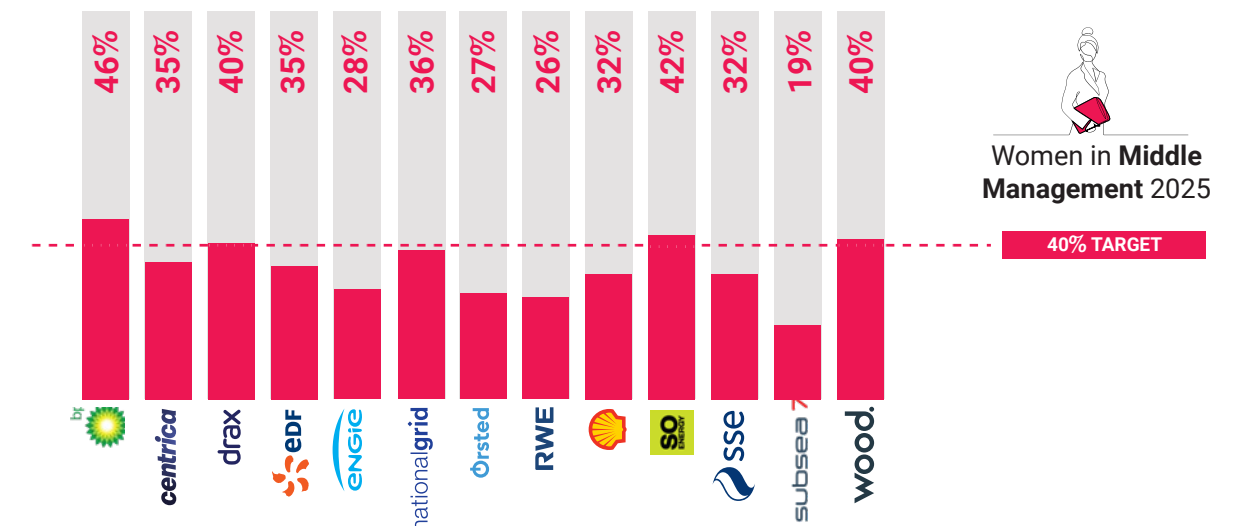
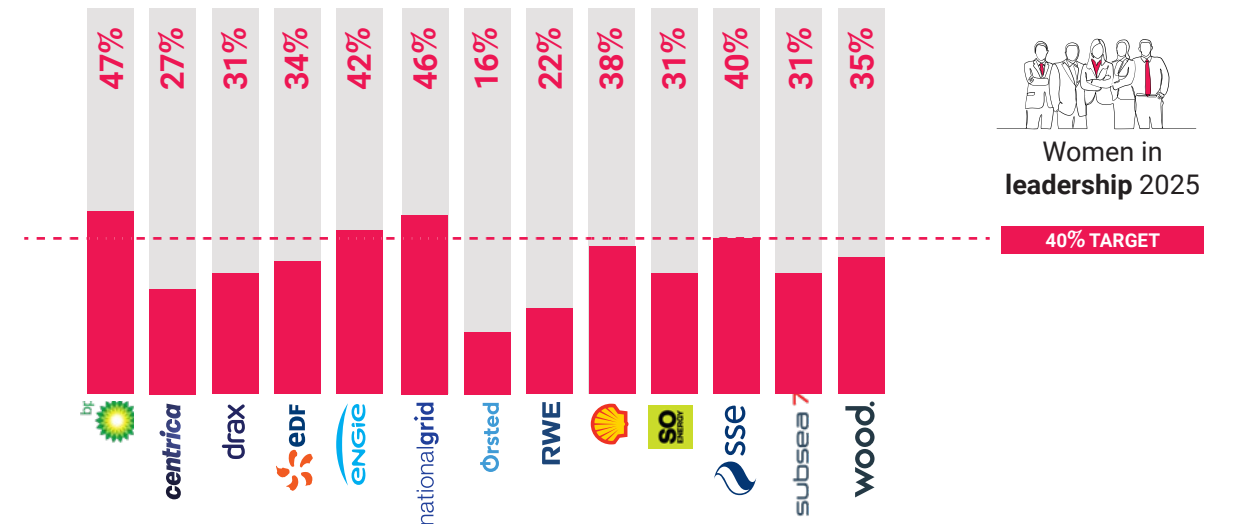
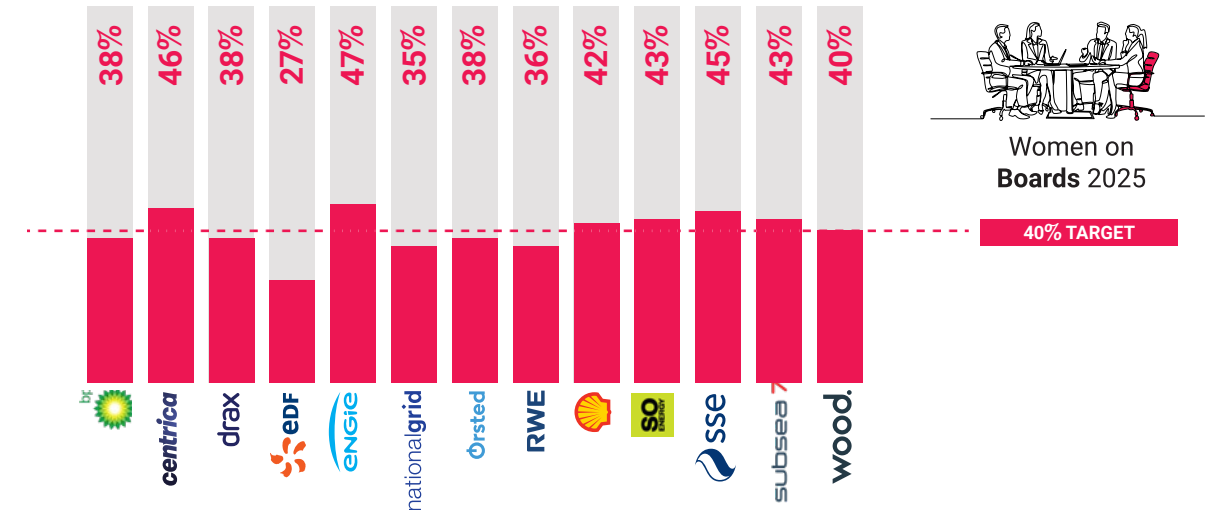
2025 Pride in Energy survey

Weathering change

Global shifts inevitably ripple into the UK, and the rollback of DEI initiatives in the United States has created challenges. For multinational players, this has meant adjusting language, targets and programmes. For example, Accenture announced the termination of employee representation goals and the discontinuation of external career development programmes for specific demographic groups, affecting approximately 11,000 UK employees.

The ripple effect is also felt in workforce sentiment. The 2025 Pride in Energy survey revealed that 71% of respondents expressed concern that political debates around diversity could undermine progress on inclusion in the UK energy sector. This anxiety underscores the importance of the UK's more determined response.

Rather than stepping back, the UK is stepping forward. The Government's Employment Rights Bill, introduced in October 2024, requires employers with 250 or more employees to publish equality action plans. Financial services regulators are also proposing minimum standards on gender and ethnic diversity. These measures, coupled with proactive leadership in the sector, show resilience: inclusion is being protected and advanced even in turbulent times.



PROGRESS ON WOMEN ON BOARDS

WOMEN IN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BOARD SEATS
WOMEN IN ALL BOARD SEATS

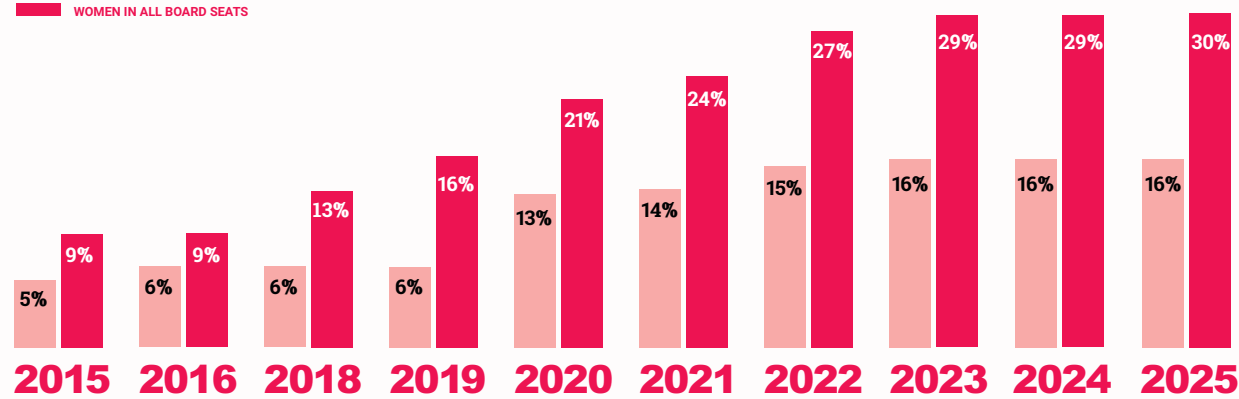




PHOTO: NATIONAL GRID / JASON ALDEN



The Coalition is not just marking moments in the calendar – it’s shaping culture, mobilising leaders, and showing what change looks like in action.

The transformative power of DEI

DEI is not only an ethical responsibility but also a catalyst for transformation. Beyond fairness, it delivers tangible business results: stronger innovation, higher performance, improved profitability, and better talent retention.

The case is clear:

Revenue growth:
Companies with diverse management teams generate 19% more revenue (Boston Consulting Group).

Profitability:
43% of businesses with diverse Boards of Directors experienced increased profits, while 85% of CEOs of inclusive organisations reported higher profitability.

Market reach:
Diverse companies are 70% more likely to capture new markets.

Decision-making:
Diverse teams make better decisions 87% of the time.

Employee engagement:
Inclusion boosts perceived team performance by 17%, decision-making quality by 20%, and collaboration by 29%.

Performance & innovation:
Inclusive organisations are twice as likely to meet or exceed financial targets, three times as likely to be high-performing, six times as likely to innovate, and eight times more likely to achieve superior business outcomes.

Talent attraction:
80% of employees consider inclusion important when choosing an employer; 39% would leave for a more inclusive workplace (Deloitte).

Consumer influence:
53% of UK consumers say a brand’s diversity and inclusion efforts influence their purchasing decisions

These statistics show the business case, while the stories in this Report show the human impact. Together, they make diversity and inclusion a strategic necessity.



The evidence is compelling: embedding DEI into organisational strategy advances fairness and fuels performance. But it is the lived experiences captured in this Report that show the true power of change.

Belonging in action

Throughout 2025, the POWERful Women Leaders Coalition has demonstrated the strength of collective action. Leaders across the sector have met regularly to reflect on challenges, to mentor emerging talent, and to amplify awareness moments such as International Women's Day, International Women in Engineering Day and National Inclusion Week.

But this is about more than visibility. The Leaders Coalition is driving transformation by sharing practices, holding one another accountable, and publicly standing together as role models. The addition of new members, including Equinor and Great British Energy, has expanded its reach and amplified its influence.

The Coalition is not just marking moments in the calendar – it is shaping culture, mobilising leaders, and showing what change looks like in action.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SSE



An incredible opportunity

2025 has highlighted both the challenges and opportunities for DEI in the UK energy sector. While global shifts have prompted caution, most UK organisations are choosing transformation over retreat. They are reframing strategies to emphasise measurable impact, business value, and, most importantly, people.

Supported by government legislation and bolstered by networks such as POWERful Women Leaders Coalition, the sector is not just maintaining inclusion but re-energising it.

The evidence is compelling: embedding DEI into organisational strategy advances fairness and fuels performance. But it is the lived experiences captured in this Report that show the true power of change.

As the UK energy sector navigates uncertainty, it is also building resilience. We have an incredible opportunity to reshape our industry, close the skills gap, and embed belonging at the heart of the energy transition. Let's not let that opportunity slip away.

The next challenge is ensuring this momentum translates into the skills, innovation and leadership needed to deliver the transition itself – the defining test explored in Chapter 2.

69m

new green jobs
forecast by 2030

World Economic Forum

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SSE

02

The Skills Gap: Energy's defining test

**Skills are the bridge between
ambition and achievement**

By empowering every voice and
unlocking talent, we can close
the gap and build a workforce
ready for the future.

From mentee to mentor

Ellie Lawton, Civil Engineer - SSE Renewables' Offshore Civil Team

My journey as a mentor began with being mentored myself. As a Civil Engineer in SSE Renewables' Offshore Civil Engineering Team, my development started during the company's graduate programme. While working on the Arklow Bank Wind Park off the east coast of Ireland, my manager encouraged me to shadow colleagues, join meetings, and take ownership of specific project packages. That trust helped me greatly and I was able to test my skills in a live environment and see the real impact of my work.

Now that I've completed the graduate scheme, I have enjoyed stepping into the role of mentor myself. Recently, I hosted a summer intern, guiding them through new challenges and

supporting their development. They gained valuable insight and confidence, and I learned more about my own leadership style. My story reflects how SSE's commitment to inclusion is about creating a continuous cycle of growth and support. It was incredibly rewarding to support someone else's development and see them step out of their comfort zone to take on new challenges.

I've seen firsthand how SSE Renewables continues to prove that progress isn't just measured in megawatts, it's also reflected in the confidence, capability, and collaboration of the people powering the transition.



The next five years will decide whether the UK energy industry merely manages the transition or truly transforms it.



CHAPTER 02

Building the skills to shape tomorrow

The UK energy sector is facing the greatest workforce challenge in its history.

Delivering Net Zero, protecting national infrastructure, and keeping energy affordable would be daunting in any era. But today the pressure is magnified by a global race for skills, investment and technology.

The International Energy Agency warns that bottlenecks in talent are already slowing the global energy transition. The World Economic Forum forecasts 69 million new green jobs by 2030. For the UK, this is no longer a domestic contest – it is an international race for people and expertise. It is a race we cannot afford to lose.

And yet, in the midst of this challenge, there is inspiration – women across the sector are proving every day that with determination, expertise and allyship, progress is possible. Their stories remind us that we are not starting from scratch but building on a foundation of talent and leadership that is already shaping change.

Within this context, the goals of POWERful Women take on even greater importance. Gender balance and inclusion are not side issues but proven contributors to resilience, innovation and growth. The energy transition will falter if it is not powered by the widest possible pool of skills, perspectives and leadership. By championing women, fostering allyship, and embedding diversity at every level, the sector can build workforces and leadership teams that are technically capable, competitive, and truly representative of the society they serve



“I recognise that conversations around diversity, equity and inclusion can sometimes feel challenging. That’s why my fellow leaders and I are taking steps to re-energise our employee networks globally, reaffirming what makes us who we are at Wood, and ensuring that conscious inclusion is openly discussed and meaningfully woven into how we lead, collaborate and grow.”

Nick Shorten
Executive President
Projects, Wood



"In a world which is volatile and full of uncertainty, I have been reminded how important it is to build an inclusive culture at BP for everyone to be comfortable to be their best selves and thrive as part of our team."

Louise Kingham CBE
SVP Europe and Head of Country UK, bp

From managing change to inspiring transformation

The sector is being tested on three interconnected fronts:

- 1 The urgent need to close the green skills gap, equipping a new and diverse generation to deliver the low-carbon and emerging energy economy.
- 2 The challenge of transitioning an ageing workforce, balancing continuity with renewal while valuing experience and creating pathways for fresh talent.
- 3 The imperative of integrating new technologies, harnessing digitalisation, AI and cyber resilience in ways that are ethical, inclusive and transformative.

These are not abstract priorities but the foundation of a fair and secure energy future. Addressing them requires leadership that does more than manage change; it must inspire transformation. In rising to this challenge, the UK energy sector has the opportunity not only to deliver Net Zero but also to set a global benchmark for inclusive, purpose-driven leadership in line with the mission of POWERful Women.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF SUBSEA7

200k

new roles will be created in clean energy by 2030

Energy & Utility Skills, 2024



From graduate to industry leader

Sophie Banham, Offtake Director - Dogger Bank D Wind Farm at Equinor

When I joined the renewables industry in 2008, offshore wind was still an emerging sector. Today it's a cornerstone of the UK's clean energy transition, and I've had the privilege of growing my career alongside it.

I often reflect that the relatively young nature of the industry has helped to support a more modern, diverse and forward-thinking workforce. Certainly, when it comes to DEI and career progress, my own experience has been positive compared to some of my peers from university who went into other industries.

Over the years, I've been part of some of the most ambitious projects in UK offshore wind. This included being part of the team that consented the world's largest offshore wind farm. I've worked across a broad range of disciplines, including environment and consenting, digitalisation, stakeholder engagement, and leadership. I've been privileged to hold roles as Industry Sponsor for the Offshore Wind Growth Partnership, and Developer Vice Chair of the Offshore Wind Industry Council.

My career has benefitted from working in companies with pretty flat structures, where you are judged on your experience, regardless of career path, age, or gender. Two of my roles called for candidates with an engineering background, which I don't have, but I have other valuable skills that outweighed this 'template' requirement. Having said that, we do need more people with engineering skills, which is why Equinor does a lot to promote STEM skills in schools and beyond.

Having taken a full year's maternity leave with both my children, I've never felt my career progression was compromised. I've always been supported to return, take on new responsibilities and continue to grow – which says a lot about the culture here at Equinor.

There's now so much evidence showing how diversity strengthens performance and innovation. We've made real progress, but we can't take it for granted. We need to keep promoting the benefits, pushing back on the counterarguments, and proactively ensuring that inclusion remains central to how the energy industry evolves.



"I feel really proud of my career development both as a female and as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. The advice I'd give is to be absolutely unafraid to go for something where you don't tick all the boxes. It's all about the strengths you have, not the boxes you tick."

Louise Innes
Director of Ireland & Energy
Business Relationships

Sector growth and green skills

Unlocking careers that power a greener tomorrow

Many industries are grappling with skills shortages, but for the UK energy sector the challenge is particularly critical.

The growth of green jobs is the foundation of the UK's transition to a low-carbon economy. More than 200,000 new roles will be created in clean energy by 2030 (Energy & Utility Skills, 2024), from offshore wind technicians to hydrogen specialists and grid engineers.

Renewable UK's 2025 Wind Industry Skills Intelligence Report forecasts that 75,000 people will be needed in the offshore wind sector alone by 2030, with ambitious scenarios suggesting as many as 112,000. Globally, the World Economic Forum anticipates 69 million green jobs by 2030, underscoring the intensity of the competition for talent.

This is both a challenge and an opportunity. First, to equip a new generation with the technical expertise to design, build and operate tomorrow's energy system. Second, to make this growth inclusive – ensuring women, people from ethnically diverse backgrounds, and underrepresented communities are part of the workforce building the infrastructure of the future. DEI is not just a fairness issue; it is a performance driver. McKinsey's Net-Zero Transition report notes that **"the transition to Net Zero is as much a workforce challenge as it is a technological one."**



The energy sector has the chance to set the pace for the wider economy by showing how green growth and inclusion go hand in hand.

Building a future in renewable engineering

Millicent Henley, Control Engineer, SSE Renewables

Creating opportunity: I never imagined myself working in renewables. But with the right support, I've found a place where I'm valued and can make a real impact.

My journey began in 2022 when I joined SSE Renewables for a summer placement with the Control Engineering team, developing some of the biggest and most exciting onshore wind farms in the country. At the time, I had no background in renewable energy, but the team saw potential in me. They gave me hands-on experience, practical mentorship, and consistent encouragement that carried me through my final year of university.

Learning through exposure and support: That early opportunity was more than just a placement; it was a gateway. SSE's approach gave me meaningful work, real engineering challenges, and the confidence to contribute. After graduating, I joined the Company's two-year structured graduate programme, which allowed me to work across different technologies before finding my passion in the cybersecurity of control systems.

Making an impact that lasts: Today, I'm helping deliver on SSE Renewables' expanding portfolio of low-carbon projects. I've contributed to key initiatives, from evaluating control equipment integrity on hydro sites to ensuring the cyber resilience of all operational sites.

My journey shows how visible, inclusive routes into technical careers can transform both individual lives and businesses. SSE Renewables continues to strengthen its early-career pipeline, welcoming 24 graduates and 18 summer placement students in 2024/25 - with growing female representation in technical roles. I'm proud to be one of many examples of how access, mentorship, and trust can help more women thrive in the engineering roles critical to achieving net zero.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF EDF

Mentoring for inclusion and growth

Kirsty Withers, WiN Mentor, EDF Nuclear Operations

When my mentee opened up about her challenges, it felt like looking back to the beginning of my career. And in helping her, I was also helping me.

That's the power of the Women in Nuclear (WiN) mentoring programme. I joined as a mentor, hoping to support another woman navigating a career in a still male-dominated industry. What I discovered was that mentoring is never one-way – it's about growing together.

Through the programme, I've been matched with a mentee from the nuclear sector. Together we've shared experiences, explored challenges, and built strategies for resilience. Along the way, I've gained new insights into my own career journey and leadership style, as much as I've given guidance.

EDF has also invested in reverse mentoring, where colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds mentor senior leaders across Nuclear Operations. This has opened space for honest conversations, built cultural intelligence, and encouraged leaders to design inclusion into everyday decision-making.

The impact has been significant. Female talent and colleagues from underrepresented backgrounds are growing in confidence and visibility, while leaders are deepening their understanding of lived experience and actively breaking down barriers. Personally, being a mentor has helped me reflect on my own career journey, the challenges I've faced, and the support I've had along the way. It has strengthened my leadership skills and expanded my network across the sector.

What I value most is the sense of community these programmes are building. They remind us that mentoring is not just about individual development, but about shaping a culture where inclusion is real, practical, and shared.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF NATIONAL GRID



Energy companies can set a benchmark for other industries by designing transition pathways that respect experience while preparing for the future.



Learning goes both ways

Darren Peiris, VP Group Head of Recruitment at National Grid

National Grid's Mutual Mentoring Programme

When Darren Peiris, VP Group Head of Recruitment at National Grid, volunteered to join the Company's pilot mutual mentoring programme, it was with a sense of curiosity rather than expectation. "I'd always heard of the concept but never had the chance to experience it," he recalls. "When the opportunity came up to pilot a scheme with a small group, I jumped at it."

The programme paired senior leaders with early-career employees, enabling two-way learning using a curriculum-based approach to sessions. For Darren, it was a chance to better understand how younger colleagues view work, leadership and the energy transition – and to reflect on his own leadership approach.

"I went in with an open mind," he explains. "Generational expectations are changing fast – the values and needs of Gen Z are very different to those of millennials. I hoped to walk away with a clearer understanding of that."

What followed was a mentoring relationship that exceeded expectations. "I still connect with my mentee now," says Darren. "We bounce ideas off each other, challenge assumptions, and even just talk about life. What made it work was that we took the time to build trust early on, and to get to know each other as people."

The experience also sharpened some important leadership skills. "It helped me to hone the art of asking powerful, open questions that allow people to answer broadly," he says. "And it strengthened my empathy. My mentee came from an intersectional background and had lived all over the world before coming to the UK to study. It takes courage to start over like that. It reminded me how vital it is that we create supportive environments for people at every stage of life and career."

For Darren, the greatest lesson was about connection and humility. "As senior leaders, we can seem distant because of structure or hierarchy – but at the end of the day, we're just people doing our best work like everyone else. You can't assume others will feel comfortable around you automatically. You have to make the first move to create a safe, open space for them to be themselves."

The programme has since influenced Darren's leadership style and perspective on inclusion. "There's a perception that age brings wisdom. Sometimes that's true, but not always. We have so much to learn from each other, regardless of generation or life stage."

17%

106,800 retirements
– equivalent to 17% of
the 2024 workforce –
by 2030

Energy & Utility Skills, 2024

Supporting today's experts
to guide tomorrow's leaders

Transitioning an ageing workforce

The energy industry is more exposed than most to the risks presented by an ageing workforce. Forecasts suggest **106,800 retirements – equivalent to 17% of the 2024 workforce** – by 2030 (Energy & Utility Skills, 2024). One in three workers is already over 50, and in some technical roles nearly two-thirds are over 45. Without effective knowledge transfer, critical projects such as nuclear lifetime extensions or grid upgrades are at risk.

This is not simply a question of numbers but of renewal and resilience. Retaining older employees through flexible roles, while bringing in younger, more diverse talent, is essential. By combining legacy expertise with fresh perspectives on sustainability and digitalisation, the sector can boost innovation and safeguard its future. Deloitte's *Ageing Workforce: The New Talent Frontier* highlights, "**Companies that design pathways for older workers to transition, rather than exit, not only protect institutional knowledge but also accelerate innovation by blending experience with fresh skills.**"

Business in the Community research also shows that organisations with strong mid-career and older-worker strategies retain knowledge, cut recruitment costs and improve performance. In energy, the stakes are higher still: a shortage of experienced engineers could stall nuclear programmes, delay offshore projects, and increase vulnerabilities across national infrastructure. This makes the case for action not just compelling but urgent.

71%

of successful
applicants
were women

EDF's STEM Returners
programme



PHOTO: COURTESY OF EDF

Returning to a career in energy

Maria Cao, Completions Coordinator, EDF

For a long time, I believed a career break had closed the door on any future career in STEM. The STEM Returners programme has shown that assumption to be wrong.

When I stepped away from industry, I wasn't sure how or even if I could step back into a STEM position. Like many skilled professionals, I knew I had the experience, but I worried about the gap on my CV and whether I would get the chance to prove myself again.

That opportunity came through EDF's STEM Returners programme. In 2024, EDF partnered with STEM Returners to launch a dedicated scheme for people like me – experienced professionals who had taken time away and wanted to return. The programme offered six-month fixed-term contracts across Hinkley Point C (HPC) and Nuclear Services, with a tailored interview process designed to recognise potential as well as past experience.

The scheme attracted more than 400 applications, and 9 of us joined EDF – 7 in HPC and 2 in Nuclear Services. Importantly, 71% of us were women, compared with the industry average of just 10.9%. That in itself felt like a powerful statement – not only was EDF creating opportunities for returners, but it was also actively improving gender representation in an industry that needs diverse talent to thrive.

For me personally, the programme changed everything. It gave me the chance to demonstrate my skills and rebuild my confidence in a supportive environment. After six months, my contract was made permanent. Today, as a Completions Coordinator, I feel a renewed sense of purpose and direction in my career.

I truly believe programmes like STEM Returners play a vital role in helping skilled professionals find their footing again after a break. They unlock potential, bring in diverse perspectives, and remind us that careers can be reignited at any stage of life.



In energy, technology is being operationalised at scale in ways that directly affect society. That makes our sector a testbed for inclusive, ethical and future-ready innovation.

Integrating new technologies

Harnessing innovation to empower people

From AI and predictive analysis to EV infrastructure and smart grid management, technology is transforming the energy landscape. Grid-related investment in digital technologies has **grown by over 50%** since 2015 (GOV UK, 2023), helping to integrate variable renewables and improve reliability. The rise of digital twins now enables companies to forecast generation, predict shortfalls and proactively prevent outages.

But with opportunity comes risk. **More than 60%** of UK energy businesses experienced cyber breaches in 2023 (IEA). As distributed energy resources multiply, vulnerabilities are expanding across the system. Transformation without inclusion also risks embedding bias and blind spots into the very systems that will underpin energy security.

Digitalisation is not just about efficiency, it is about trust. Accenture's Reinventing Utilities for a Net-Zero World notes that, **"Digital transformation in energy is not about technology adoption alone – it requires a workforce with the confidence, skills and inclusivity to embed innovation at scale."** BCG's Future of Energy also stresses that decentralised systems will only deliver value if underpinned by robust cyber and ethical frameworks. This requires leaders to embrace both courage and caution: courage to harness technology's transformative power, and caution to ensure it serves the whole of society.



Making inclusion practical

Rachel Disney, Head of D&I, RWE AG

RWE's Inclusion Guide AI companion

At RWE, inclusion has always been part of how teams collaborate. Yet as the Company's workplace has diversified, it became clear that even well-intentioned colleagues sometimes lacked practical guidance on what inclusive behaviour looks like in everyday situations.

That insight led to the creation of the Inclusion Guide – an AI-powered D&I companion that helps employees find answers to everyday inclusion questions. Accessible to everyone through RWE's internal AI platform, the Guide offers practical, context-specific advice on inclusive language, bias mitigation, accessible meetings, and respectful communication. It can also direct users to internal policies or reporting channels when needed.

"The Inclusion Guide is about making inclusion practical, sustainable and part of daily life," says Rachel Disney - Head of D&I, RWE AG, who led its development. "It's there for the moments when you might hesitate to ask a question out loud."

Early feedback indicates that the Guide helps employees feel more confident to act inclusively, while managers use it to embed inclusion into processes and conversations. Beyond its technology, the initiative is supporting a culture in which curiosity and learning are encouraged, and inclusion becomes everyone's responsibility.

"My hope is that the Inclusion Guide becomes a genuine D&I companion for everyone," says Rachel. "It's a safe space where you can ask the questions you might be scared to ask out loud. Ultimately, it's about empowering people to take those everyday steps that build a truly inclusive workplace, together."



DR POO AND HOW WE MAKE **BIO-GAS**



Turning science into storytelling

Competition winner, Lois, with Simon Middleton, ENGIE Supply UK

How ENGIE is inspiring the next generation of green energy professionals

To get children thinking about green energy, ENGIE found an unexpected hero.

The “Dr Poo” campaign was created to make renewable energy accessible, engaging, and memorable for young audiences. Using humour and storytelling, the campaign explained how biogas can power homes and businesses.

Through a series of school visits across Lancashire, Yorkshire and Somerset, ENGIE’s direct sales and Renewable Gases UK teams brought the science of green gas to life. More than 1,000 children took part in classroom sessions, competitions, and STEM-week activities designed to show that sustainability can be fun.

By simplifying complex science through comic strips and interactive workshops, the initiative helped demystify how renewable gas works while encouraging curiosity and critical thinking.

“Dr Poo was our way of showing that innovation isn’t just about technology, it’s about how we connect with people. By turning renewable energy into a story that children could laugh at, learn from, and remember, we’ve positioned ENGIE as a leader not just in green gas, but in how we inspire the next generation to think differently about energy.”

The campaign did more than raise awareness – it built trust through education. By investing in young people’s understanding of renewable energy, ENGIE is helping to develop the very skills and curiosity that will drive the energy transition.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ENGIE



PHOTO: COURTESY OF SUBSEA7

Learning to lead the digital transformation

Jessica Tjandra, ECA Engineer

Subsea7’s Festival of Learning 2025

At Subsea7, digital transformation isn’t something happening to people, it’s something happening with them. By embedding technology literacy into everyday learning, the company is turning innovation from a specialist pursuit into a shared journey of discovery. Its 2025 Festival of Learning showed how inclusion, curiosity and connection can make digital change not just technological, but profoundly human.

Digital transformation is reshaping every corner of the energy industry and Subsea7 is putting people at the centre of that change. The Festival captured this spirit perfectly, a global celebration of learning that invited everyone, from apprentices to senior leaders, to explore how technology is transforming the way they work, collaborate and lead.

Over 23 days, colleagues across the world took part in online and in-person sessions under the theme “Embrace Agility.” Through Subsea7’s learning platform, Academy7, the Festival brought together internal experts and external voices to make

complex topics – from AI and big data to cybersecurity and digital literacy – practical, engaging and accessible to all.

What makes the Festival different is its inclusivity. Sessions don’t just teach new tools; they built confidence and community. From technical demonstrations to personal reflections on agile careers, the programme highlighted that belonging and continual learning go hand in hand.

“As an early career engineer, the Festival of Learning opened my eyes to the breadth of expertise across Subsea7. What makes this event so valuable is how it brings people together. From technical sessions to personal development, it’s a reminder that learning isn’t just about knowledge – it’s about connection, curiosity and building an inclusive culture.”

For Subsea7, the message is clear: the future of energy will be powered not just by technology, but by people who never stop learning.



Progress comes when leaders move beyond targets to transformation.



Great things happen when leaders champion women, practise allyship, and make diversity of thought and experience a cornerstone of strategy.

Conclusion: the leadership test

For the energy sector, closing the skills gap is not just a human resources exercise. It is about national resilience, consumer confidence and the success of the Net Zero transition. Green skills growth, transitioning an ageing workforce, and integrating new technologies are not abstract themes; they are the foundation of a secure, affordable and fair energy future.

The evidence is clear: more than 200,000 new roles by 2030, over 100,000 retirements looming, and more than 60% of UK energy firms already hit by cyber breaches. These are not abstract statistics but flashing warning lights on the dashboard of the transition.

This is a leadership test as much as a workforce one. Boards, CEOs and policymakers must act with urgency: investing in green skills, creating pathways for older workers, embedding digital resilience, and above all making inclusion a visible, personal commitment.

At POWERful Women, we see that progress comes when leaders move beyond targets to transformation. Great things happen when leaders champion women, practise allyship, and make diversity of thought and experience a cornerstone of strategy. The evidence shows this delivers not only fairness but performance. It creates leadership teams that inspire trust, attract talent, and innovate faster.

Because in energy, the skills gap is the system gap. Bridging it is how we secure trust, resilience and prosperity. It is how we show the world that the UK can lead a just and inclusive energy transition.

The next five years will decide whether the UK energy industry merely manages the transition or truly transforms it. Let's seize this moment to lead with purpose, inclusion and courage.

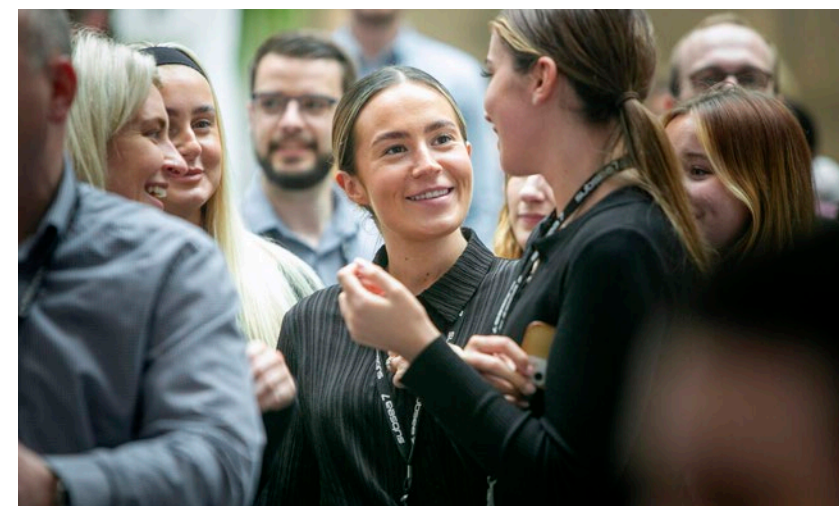


PHOTO: COURTESY OF SUBSEA7

200k

new roles will be created in clean energy by 2030.

Energy & Utility Skills, 2024



03

Leadership, legacy
and the next five years

Legacy is built through action

Let's lead with purpose,
act with courage and make
inclusion the standard by
which progress is measured.



Legacy will not be measured only in megawatts or milestones. It will be measured in the cultures we build, the people we empower, and the trust we leave behind.

CHAPTER 03

Leadership, legacy and the next five years

The next five years will define the legacy of today's leaders. The choices made now will determine whether the UK energy sector simply manages change or leads it.

The case studies in this report show that progress happens when leadership is personal. The organisations featured here have shown that inclusion isn't only a principle – it's a practice built through everyday actions, honest conversations and the courage to listen. These moments of leadership, multiplied across teams and companies, are what drive transformation.

To achieve net zero, the sector will need to fill more than 200,000 new roles by 2030 and 400,000 by 2050. As well as being a workforce challenge, it's an opportunity to build an industry that reflects the world it serves. The question for every organisation is not only how to recruit, but how to lead – how to create workplaces where everyone can contribute their skills, ideas and experience to shape a shared energy future.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF SUBSEA7



Opening doors in energy trading

Florence O'Farrell, Intern Graduate Programme, RWEST and Elizabeth Fox, Weather Analyst at RWEST

RWE Supply & Trading's Women-in-Trading Internship

Energy trading has long been a male-dominated field. The RWE Supply & Trading (RWEST) Women-in-Trading Internship is helping change that, by giving women early-career experience and exposure to one of the most dynamic areas of the energy transition.

Developed to increase diversity of thought and improve gender balance in trading, the 12-week internship places participants within RWEST's commercial trading desks, where they gain hands-on experience with real-time markets and advanced analytics. Each intern is supported by a mentor and a buddy and meets senior leaders through RWE's Women's Network.

For Florence O'Farrell, the experience was invaluable. "I gained exposure to a wide range of trading desks and was trusted with the creative freedom to solve problems in my own way," she says. "My mentor helped me progress from a Python beginner to someone who could approach analytical challenges confidently."

Now part of RWEST's Graduate Programme, Florence uses the skills she built through the internship in her first role within the Commercial Asset Management team. "Everyone invested their time in me," she says. "It showed me what inclusion really means by being given opportunities, supported to learn, and trusted to contribute."

By combining mentoring, digital skills development, and experiential learning, the Women-in-Trading Internship demonstrates how inclusion and innovation go hand in hand, building individual confidence while boosting the sector's future capability.

Elizabeth Fox, Weather Analyst at RWEST, adds the mentor perspective: "Being a mentor was both challenging and rewarding, and it was a huge privilege to see Florence learn to code over the course of the summer. Taking on this responsibility for only a short duration was a chance for me to step up professionally, and has given me the confidence to consider further opportunities for leadership. No model or piece of analysis is guaranteed to last but the experience and skills we've both developed puts us in good stead for the next chapter of our careers."



Technology will drive the next chapter of the transition, but people will define it.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SSE



The challenge is immense, but so is the opportunity.

Tomorrow's legacy begins with today's decisions

This is our moment to turn ambition into action

Reaching net zero will take more than 200,000 new roles by 2030 and twice that by 2050 — but this is more than a numbers challenge. It's a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape an industry that truly reflects the world it serves. The real question isn't just how we recruit, but how we lead — creating workplaces where everyone can contribute their skills, ideas and energy to build a cleaner, fairer future together.

Legacy will not be measured only in megawatts or milestones. It will be measured in the cultures we build, the people we empower, and the trust we leave behind. The leaders who champion inclusion today are not just meeting targets; they're creating conditions for innovation, resilience and long-term success.

The challenge is immense, but so is the opportunity. By leading with purpose and conviction, the UK energy industry can show what change looks like when it is powered by every voice. The next five years are a test of leadership, and a chance to build a legacy that endures.

The future of energy will be written by those who **act now**. Every voice has a role in shaping a fairer, stronger energy future.

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