

# Raytheon UK

## Tackling gender inequality in the cyber security sector



**G**ender diversity within the cyber security sector must be more than just a buzzword that is thrown around, it needs to result in action.

At a global level, women only comprise 11% of the global cyber workforce. Here in the UK the problem is even more acute with the proportion of

women in the sector standing at 8%, one of the world's lowest.

As the demand for individuals with cyber security skills grows, organisations are depriving themselves of a huge talent pool if they fail to recruit more women into cyber roles. Gender balanced teams create diversity of thought, which in turn leads to greater innovation. Such creativity is crucial in cyber, where hackers are constantly innovating and finding new ways to cause trouble.

At Raytheon, we invest in the development of cyber skills amongst women across the UK. Taking the lessons that we have learnt as a global business to benefit the UK cyber security sector, we support initiatives such as the National Cyber Security Centre's CyberFirst Girls competition and the UK Cyber Security Challenge, both of which do great work in encouraging the next generation of female cyber profes-

**“We will never out-hire the cyber threat. Strategic decisions have been made, for instance to partner with organisations such as Youthfed and the Women in Cyber Academy, to ensure we have the future skills we need”**

sionals. Our work with the Women in Cyber Academy is also vital since it is focused not just on those with technical skills, but on women with different

career backgrounds including those returning to work. These steps will not instantly change the landscape, but they will help plug the gap. On this International Women's Day, let our focus be on attracting everyone regardless of background, gender or experience. Whether your specialisms are in the arts or sciences, you can help us find the talent we need for a safe and secure UK cyberspace.

**James Gray is Managing Director of Cyber & Intelligence and the Executive Sponsor for Diversity & Inclusion at Raytheon UK.**

**R**aytheon is a supporter of the Women in Cyber Academy, a 10 week programme designed to prepare women for a cyber career. Emily, a senior software engineer at Raytheon, has helped recruit two cohorts from the Academy

Emily spends her day developing features and creating solutions whilst leading a team of innovative cyber engineers.

But did she always dream of working in cyber? Not entirely. “I studied at the University of Leicester and received a first class Master's



degree in Mathematics. It wasn't until my final year thesis when I truly developed an interest in programming.”

Expected to venture into accounting, Emily is the first of her family to go into the sector.

“I wanted a career where there was scope to continually learn new skills and be challenged. After talking about my role and expressing how interesting it is, a couple of friends have since started learning to code in their spare time.”

As the 27 year old continues to progress through the ranks, she credits the fact that her role never gets boring as a reason for why it's so enjoyable. “Every project is different, with new technologies and tools to learn, and the purpose of the work is interesting. We work closely with our customers, allowing us to understand and see the importance of our work.”

With this year's International Woman's Day theme being 'Each4Equal', how can more women be encouraged to enter a stereotypical 'man's world'?

“I feel that engineers can help create a gender-balanced world by vocally and publicly opening the doors to females with an interest in STEM subjects. Getting females into an engineering role is good but I believe the hardest step is making them feel comfortable enough to stay there.”

Helping to forge a gender equal world is something that Emily feels passionate about and would love to get involved with.

“I think awareness needs to be increased across all areas of the UK. STEM events need to be followed up with further engagement and women need to be given the opportunity to talk to other women already in STEM-based careers.”

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