Welcome to the Launchpad Newsletter

Welcome to the Launchpad newsletter. This quarterly newsletter highlights what ambassadors around WSP are doing to support Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) engagement.

What is Launchpad?
Launchpad supports engagement with students under 19, to inspire them into STEM careers. Launchpad is currently managed by the PGN, however anyone can arrange and engage in STEM events.

3 Key Areas
Launchpad is split into three areas.
1. STEM activities
2. Work experience
3. Schools engagement support

Launchpad Hub
All material and guidance is hosted on the Launchpad Hub. This is easily accessed from the ‘Quick Links’ section of the WSP intranet or below.
https://sharepoint2013.wspgroup.com/sites/pgn/uk/LaunchPad/SitePages/Home.aspx

Office Leads
Most offices have a dedicated Launchpad office lead who is your local point of contact for all STEM queries. All coordinators are listed on the Hub.

Launchpad Day
23 April is Launchpad Day! Look out for a WSP Twitter takeover and events happening in your office.

Jan – Mar 2018

40 STEM events
204 Hours volunteered
14 Work experience students
49 Work experience days
37 Schools engaged

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#WSPLaunchpad
Birmingham - Envision School Engagement Project

From 7 March until 23 April Michael Blues, Mitchell Dixon, Trelawney Cooper and Johanna Elsener from the Birmingham office have been supporting a class of 15 from Bishop Walsh School as part of the Envision scheme.

Envision help young people to develop the skills they need to make a success of their own lives through a ‘Community-Apprentice’ scheme. This is an inter-school competition which requires young people to develop and demonstrate the competencies most valued by employers.

WSP have provided mentors for 3 coaching sessions to provide advice and coaching on how the class can manage their project on a budget, as well as on preparing and giving a presentation at the boardroom final in front of local politicians.

This event has been the first event WSP have hosted for Envision and the school. It is hoped this can be repeated in the future.

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Newcastle - Accenture Girls in STEM

Girls in STEM is aimed at encouraging 11-13 year old girls to pursue subjects and careers in STEM subjects. There were a range of inspirational speakers from across STEM sectors and interactive workshops giving hands-on examples.

Katherine Harold, Monica Seshasayee, Rebecca Shepherd, Rebecca Sewell, Katie McQuade, Jacqueline, Dixon, Tiffany Bienfait, Jessica Clark and Ruth Gibson hosted a WSP stall at the event, for the third year in a row. The aim of the stall was to provide examples of what life as an engineer is like and the different paths the girls can take.

We ran 2 activities. The build a tower competition provided groups of pupils with a set of materials (paper, sellotape, straws etc.) and tasked them to construct a tower. The girls worked in small teams to come up with a design and build the tower, asking for help and advice when required. The towers were measured and a VR headset given as first prize at the end of the day.

In the second activity, students stuck post-it notes on a flipchart with words they associate with engineering after reading the WSP posters created by female engineers.
Other Events

01  Birmingham - Aimhigher Plus
02  Bristol - Big Bang Fair
03  Northampton KierWSP - NHS Cafe sci
04  Basingstoke - Step in to Engineering
05  London DSQ - Prior Weston Primary School Engineering Club
06  Exeter - South Molton Community College Talk
07  Southampton – Woodlands College Careers Fair
08  Liverpool - Bridge to Schools
Edinburgh – Tynewater Primary School Office Visit

In March 2018 Scott Hood, Anastasija Taranenko & Laura Mayne from the Edinburgh office hosted 26 students from Tynewater Primary School.

The students came to learn more about engineering and WSP. The visit started with a short, interactive presentation from each discipline to give the students an overview of each. Throughout the day, several tasks were given to the students including; a competition between teams to build the tallest structure out of spaghetti, designing an eco-school, testing the strength and understanding the different types of structural loads on a pre-made spaghetti bridge and origami.

WSP organised the event and provided lunch and refreshments throughout the day. Prizes were also given to winning teams and all pupils were given an Easter egg.

The students described the day as “Best school trip ever”, “I want to be an engineer” and “Can we come back?”

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Shropshire – Challenge Day

In 2017 Dave Davies, Paul Savil, Rhian Townsend, Justine Combe and Arezoo Ilbeygi attended the South Shropshire Challenge Day at Bishop’s Castle Community College.

WSP planned a number of short-duration practical problem solving tasks, which the students attended in rotation throughout the day, while our ambassadors hosted the tasks and judged each team’s performance.

The students were challenged to design and build a prototype piece of machinery to benefit the construction industry, using supplied pneumatic components (syringes and PVC tube). These were built in advance by the teams, so they could be tested and judged on the challenge day.

We also planned and hosted a number of short problem solving challenges including ‘the egg drop challenge’, a levelling task using survey equipment and K’nex towers.

We have an ongoing relationship with the South Shropshire STEM Volunteers and Bishop’s Castle Community College and are currently planning the 2018 Challenge Day.