

"STEM subjects provide incredible opportunities to address some of the most important global challenges we face in the 21st Century. We need to ensure that girls and women are able to realise that they can, with the right support, 'reach for the sky' and have amazing careers so we don't miss out on the talents they can bring to bear and the difference they can make. This project will contribute to ensuring the potential of women aspiring to STEM based careers is enabled."

Project Aim

To **enable** women in countries within Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) to be **educated** in a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subject, leading to a career which will ultimately **empower** them to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This project is an extension of our excellent existing project work to raise school girls' awareness of the exciting career opportunities in STEM and will help us to encourage women over 18 into STEM careers.

Why This Project?

Globally, only 14% of the STEM workforce consists of females and only 7% in South Africa.

In the UK, 9% of girls (compared to 29% of boys) go on to do a degree or level 4 qualification in maths, physics, computer science or engineering and a 2017 survey indicates that only 11% of the engineering workforce is female.

The percentage of women researchers in science is 14% in Bangladesh and 7.8% in Nepal.

Who Will This Project Help?

- Women 18 years old and beyond.
- Women applying for vocational qualifications, apprenticeships (where possible), access and foundation courses and degree courses.
- Women from every country in the Soroptimist Great Britain and Ireland Federation.

How Can YOU Be Involved?

There will be opportunities for members to get involved as Project Ambassadors (in each Region in the UK and in each country outside the UK) and as mentors providing both subject specific and moral support.



This is a unique SIGBI led project, which will have an impact in all countries of the Federation.

It also provides an opportunity for us to raise the profile of Soroptimist International Great Britain & Ireland through our own work.

"It's vitally important that the STEM workforce reflects the society we serve and with a large gender imbalance still persisting, I'm excited about this new project that will encourage more women to pursue careers in these fields."
Roma Agrawal (Structural Engineer awarded the MBE in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours List)

Dame Sue Ion DBE OBE FRS FREng



Project Goal

To raise £250,000 over the life of the project and support at least 50 women into STEM based career paths to reach their full potential.

The aspiration is for at least one woman from every country in SIGBI to benefit from this project.

Our Partners

The project is in partnership with an existing SIGBI Charity, the Diamond Education Grant [DEG].

It would be managed by the WOMEN into STEM Steering Group.

Note: The DEG will continue to run in its present format alongside this project

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This project is clearly aligned to:

- SDG 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- SDG 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- SDG 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

However, it is argued that all of the SDGs cannot be achieved without input from those working in STEM related careers.

Our Legacy

Our legacy will be more women working in STEM and contributing to solving the world's problems and achieving the SDGs. Critical mass theory suggests that attaining a certain proportion of a minority group triggers transformation that improves conditions for minority group members meaning that as more women enter STEM others will be inspired to follow.