

Media Information
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Technology is (also) for women

How the BMW Group is attracting women to STEM careers

Munich. Working on the cutting edge, helping shape the future and finding solutions to problems – that is what female engineers love about their careers with the BMW Group. The company aims to get even more women excited about technology. Although the percentage of women in the workforce continues to climb, it could be higher – especially in the technical professions. Women's creativity and thinking make a positive contribution to diversity at the BMW Group – and diversity is a success factor that makes companies more innovative. Growing demand for workers can only be met with increasing representation of women in future competences.

Ilka Horstmeier, member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, responsible for People and Real Estate, Labour Relations Director, underlined that: "We want to get more young women interested in STEM careers, so we can shape the future of individual mobility with them. We believe in a diverse team spirit, with equal opportunities and responsibility for each individual. That is how we are making BMW electric, digital and circular."

The BMW Group is therefore taking advantage of International Women's Day on 8 March to highlight the countless opportunities for women in the STEM field. To target them, it is important to spark an interest in technical subjects at an early age. Inspiring role models also play an important part.

The following female engineers took an interest in technology from a young age: Céline Laurent-Winter always loved maths, physics and computers at school; Kirsten Matheus's experience was similar, with mathematics one of her favourite subjects; Stella Clarke particularly enjoyed classes where she and the other girls were allowed to experiment, such as programming a robotic arm. Today, all three are successful engineers at the BMW Group.

#empowerGirl: Getting to know companies up close

These three women's biographies have one thing in common – they all loved numbers and technology, even as children and teenagers. This is precisely the age where BMW Group initiatives aim to reach girls. The company's latest commitment is supporting the initiative #empowerGirl, an online portal designed to connect schoolgirls interested in STEM with companies and enable them to gain early insights into technical professions. Girls can check out internship opportunities online and get in touch with contacts at the companies directly.

Girls' Day on 25 April, which the BMW Group participates in more and more widely nationwide every year, also provides insights into real-world scenarios. On this day, the company opens its doors to girls aged from 14 to 19 and spotlights STEM careers related to automotive production. The focus of this action day is on asking questions and trying things out without feeling nervous.

Maker Spaces: Discovering a passion for technical topics

Try it out for yourself – that is also the concept behind the so-called Maker Space in Munich which the BMW Group is partnering with: The publicly accessible workshop is based on the concept of explorative learning and lowers the threshold for experimenting with technology. It creates a no-pressure environment in which women, in particular, can discover their passion for technical subjects. Development engineer Stella Clarke loves the "terrific atmosphere" at the Maker Space, which boosts self-belief with a "you can do it" attitude.

High percentage of women in talent development programmes

Once an interest in technology has been awakened, it is vital to continue encouraging young women and supporting them on the road to an engineering

career. The BMW Group ensures there is high female representation in its talent development programmes. For example, women have made up over 40 percent of its AcceleratiON trainee programme for years.

Work-life balance is still a decisive factor for women pursuing a career. The BMW Group's joint leadership model plays a particularly important role in this context: Both men and women have the opportunity to share a managerial position with equal responsibility during a transition period. This makes it easier to balance work and family during certain phases in life.

Inspiring women as role models

Experience has shown that girls and young women need strong role models they can identify with and who encourage them to assert themselves in a field still largely dominated by men. Engineers Céline Laurent-Winter, Kirsten Matheus and Stella Clarke are exactly that kind of inspiring role model.

Céline Laurent-Winter: Learning never ends

"If you love STEM subjects, stick with it! There are exciting jobs and future-oriented topics waiting for you. Women are just as good as men at these things!" encourages Céline Laurent-Winter. Laurent-Winter, who was born in France and has been with the BMW Group for almost 19 years, currently works in vehicle connectivity. After studying production and automation technology, she earned a PhD in computer science. She says the most exciting thing about her job is that, with a career in STEM, you never stop learning. "The digital world offers endless possibilities that are constantly growing."

Kirsten Matheus: Changing things for the better

"What makes it exciting is the diversity – from highly technical to highly strategic, everything is possible," says Kirsten Matheus about her job as an engineer. She describes herself as having an "engineering personality". Solving problems and achieving goals has always given her tremendous satisfaction.

She has worked for the BMW Group for 14 years in electronics development and is responsible for strategy for communication technologies. A career as an engineer appeals to her on two levels: She wants to change things for the better and, at the same time, be able to provide for a family on her salary.

Stella Clarke: Tracking down talents

"I believe women need more encouragement," says Stella Clarke, from Australia, who studied mechanical engineering and has worked for the BMW Group for 17 years as a development engineer. She developed the idea for changing the colour of the vehicle body with innovative E Ink technology. "Believe in yourself!" she urges young women. In her view, every child is eager to explore and figure out how the world works. She believes young people need more encouragement and inspiration to engage with science and technology.

Driven by Diversity: Diversity is the foundation of our success

The BMW Group views diversity as a strength. Diversity helps us recruit and retain the best talents and meet our stakeholders' expectations worldwide. We promote a culture that is free of prejudice and values differences and believe that equity and inclusion are fundamental requirements for this.

BMW Group topics and stories

On selected national and international days of remembrance and action, the company shares topics and stories related to these special days. You are invited to reach out to us with your own requests for topics – and we will share insights and introduce you to interesting people at the BMW Group.

The BMW Group will be publishing topics and stories for the following days of remembrance and action in 2024:

6 April: International Day of Sport for Development and Peace

21 May: World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

24 June: Day of Architecture

15 July: World Youth Skills Day

16 August: World Bratwurst Day

14 September: World First Aid Day

9 October: International Fire Prevention Day

30 November: Computer Security Day

3 December: International Day of Persons with Disabilities

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The BMW Group

With its four brands, BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2022, the BMW Group sold nearly 2.4 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2022 was € 23.5 billion on revenues amounting to € 142.6 billion. As of 31 December 2022, the BMW Group had a workforce of 149,475 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

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