More female STEM role models needed, as nearly 7 in 10 agree STEM jobs are the future

25.06.24, **Bracknell**, **UK** – The next government must do more to encourage women into STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths) careers, as recent 3M research reveals that over half (53%) of UK adults believe that the government should play a pivotal role in promoting STEM careers among the youth.

Increased importance must be placed on the visibility of STEM role models, Sarah Chapman, 3M senior technical manager and Women in STEM ambassador, has urged while on stage at the <u>Perspektywy Women in Tech Summit</u> in Warsaw, Poland.

Her keynote address focused on how we can ensure that the sector doesn't lose the untapped potential that lies among women and young girls who lack the confidence to pursue a career in STEM. She highlighted that one of the best ways to tackle this is boosting the visibility and diversity of STEM role models, as this has been proven to <u>significantly increase</u> young girls' interest in STEM subjects, as well as supporting and encouraging women navigating existing careers.

STEM is the future

This call to action follows the latest<u>3M State of Science Insights</u> research, which revealed that UK adults see both STEM careers and diverse workforces as critical factors influencing the future of work. The study found that over three quarters (77%) agree that diversity in the workforce is important, and nearly 7 out of 10 agree that jobs in STEM are the future of work.

3M's research further revealed that STEM jobs are the second-most likely type of job that UK adults would advise a younger person to pursue, behind skilled trades, with Brits citing the growth of the field (51%), the belief that STEM skills play an increasing role in all jobs (49%), and the fact STEM jobs offer high pay (41%) as the key factors influencing their view.

Encouraging STEM careers with representation

With STEM careers so central to the future of work, Sarah's talk at the Women in Tech Summit called attention to the urgent need for diverse and relatable representation, particularly at a time when a staggering 56% of women leave the tech industry 10-20 years into their careers. In particular, she highlighted the need for a wider range of role models – a combination of those that break glass ceilings and inspire from afar and those who are closer to home and can provide mentoring, open doors, and create opportunities – sharing how they balance life and work at every career stage to help put a stop to this attrition of talent.

Sarah Chapman, 3M senior technical manager and Women in STEM ambassador, said: "It's crucial for every woman considering or navigating a STEM career to have a sky full of role models to look up to. Now more than ever, we need diverse, relatable role models sharing how they balance life and work at every career stage. Everyone must be represented."

When it comes to early careers, 3M's research reported that as well as the government (53%), UK adults also see companies (50%), and parents (42%) as most responsible for encouraging young people to pursue STEM careers.

Having always taken active responsibility in encouraging young people into STEM careers, 3M's Sarah Chapman is a passionate and longstanding advocate for diverse representation in the sector. Alongside her day job, she volunteers as Board Vice Chair at Farnborough College of Technology and is on the steering committee of 3M's EMEA Technical Women's Leadership Forum and STEM Champion for 3M North Europe.

To support representation within the STEM sector, 3M has globally pledged to create five million unique STEM and Skilled Trades learning experiences for underrepresented individuals by the end of 2025.

The Perspektywy Women in Tech Summit took place on 12 and 13 June in Warsaw, Poland. The event was dedicated to empowering women and non-binary individuals in the tech industry and included numerous speakers and special guests, upskilling workshops, tech talks, networking opportunities, and more.

About the State of Science Insights

The 3M State of Science Insights is an independent survey conducted by Morning Consult that examines global and local market attitudes towards science. The survey was conducted from December 2023 to January 2024 and covered 10 countries in Asia-Pacific, North America, South America and Europe, including the UK.

About 3M

At 3M, we aim to make what is indispensable to empower modern life, advance human progress and deliver a brighter future through 3M Science.

The UK is home to one of the largest 3M subsidiaries outside the USA, with 1,270 people across eight locations, including four manufacturing sites. Products manufactured in the UK include coated abrasives, personal safety equipment and adhesive tapes.

As a strategic partner of the British Science Association, 3M is a passionate advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths).

Learn more about 3M's creative solutions to the world's problems by visiting our News Centre a<u>hews.3m.co.uk</u> or follow <u>3m.uk</u> on Instagram.

https://news.3m.co.uk/2024-06-25-More-female-STEM-role-models-needed,-as-nearly-7-in-10-agree-STEM-jobs-are-the-future