

News story: Cumbria is called upon to help drive gender balance

Recognising the unique contribution that the county makes to the nuclear sector, 'Women in Nuclear UK' will launch a dedicated 'Cumbria' branch, at an event held at the new National College for Nuclear.

Claire Gallery-Strong from Sellafield Ltd heads up the [WiN](#) Cumbria team, she said;

There is a unique concentration of nuclear capability in Cumbria and by strengthening links here, WiN UK can help the local industry reach its full potential by maximising the talents of all.

At the launch we are letting people know how we can help, whether that be through training, mentoring services and building a valuable network in the area.

However, this is also a call to action. It's everyone's responsibility to ensure we create an inclusive and fair environment that helps attract, retain and build a diverse workforce of the future, for Cumbria and the UK.

Speakers include Cumbrian entrepreneur and MD of Prima Uno Limited, Sarah Purdham, she said:

This is something very close to my heart as there is a huge wealth of talent and experience in women in West Cumbria and in the nuclear industry.

I am looking forward to helping people follow their dreams and harness their career ambitions by listening to people and sharing my experiences, my own journey and also some of the mistakes I have made along the way.

Equality and diversity expert Alison McDermott and Sellafield Ltd's Dorothy Gradden OBE are also speaking.

WiN UK was established in 2014 to increase the skills base in the nuclear industry by encouraging gender balance, improve the representation of women in leadership, engage with the public on nuclear issues and support the industry with tools and information.

Claire Gallery-Strong added;

The overwhelming response to our soft launch shows that there is a

real appetite for collaboration in this area. We have people at various stages of their career, from a broad range of organisations and disciplines, all hoping to share ideas and experiences.

The WiN Cumbria team will carry out the objectives of WIN UK on a local basis and will engage with the local industry and support career progression through mentoring and networking. It also aims to attract younger women into the nuclear industry through engagement with local schools and universities.

Currently only 22% of the UK's nuclear industry is female, and this number declines significantly at senior levels, statistics that WiN UK is working to change. There is strong evidence to suggest that an inclusive environment, with diverse teams, leads to better performance.