

# Atkins launches industry first STEM School Governor's programme

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Atkins – a member of the SNC-Lavalin Group – has established a programme with Governors for Schools, a national education charity that finds, places and supports governors on school and academy boards.

The programme will see Atkins professionals work on a voluntary basis with primary and secondary schools across England to help promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects and raise the profile of engineering as a career path in a direct response to the sector's skills and diversity challenges.

Atkins has made a commitment to place 44 STEM and Careers Link governors by 2024, with a specific focus on girls' schools, schools in areas of high deprivation and engaging children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) – benefitting a minimum of 18,000 under-represented learners from the age of 4 to 16, as well as adults in a number of SEND settings.

The governors will offer strategic guidance, working with school leadership teams to bring an outside perspective to curriculum delivery which will include collaborating with Atkins subject matter experts to drive improvement in how concepts such as digital technology and net zero fit into education.

So far, 17 governors across England and Wales are projected to donate 1,367 hours of voluntary time to schools in the next 12 months. The programme is open to all staff at Atkins, giving them the opportunity to develop new skills they can apply back to their careers.

Richard Robinson, CEO Atkins UK and Europe, said: “I’m very proud to see Atkins leading the way as the first organisation from our sector to partner with Governors for Schools.

“As one of the UK’s largest design, engineering and project management consultancies, we have a responsibility to proactively address a skills shortage that continues to impact UK productivity, as well as a distinct lack of diversity that has characterised our industry for far too long.”

“As our recent [levelling up research](#) shows, rebalancing in the form of skills development and the future workforce is critical to delivering real economic change and long-term social value.”

Jess Bates, a client director at Atkins and Governors for Schools programme lead, said: “We have a unique opportunity to revolutionise the way the industry engages with STEM education, bringing a focus to skills of the future and creating a workforce that is truly reflective of society.

“This programme puts 44 schools at the front and centre of our supply chain for a minimum term of 4 years, allowing us to plug in a pipeline of classroom enrichment and track the impact of our involvement as children progress from the classroom, straight into entry-level roles within Atkins or our supply chain and on our major projects.

“We now look forward to building closer ties with Governors for Schools and to facilitating wider industry involvement through joint engagement with clients and the wider supply chain.”

Emma Harris, Head of Recruitment at Governors for Schools, said: “We’re delighted to have such a committed partner working with us to not only fill governor vacancies, but to drive systemic change in how industry supports schools.”

*Photo credit: Atkins*