



**MEDIA RELEASE  
5 OCTOBER 2009**

**278 YEARS TO ACHIEVE GENDER PARITY IN ENGINEERING IS NOT GOOD  
ENOUGH SAY UKRC AND ETB**

Annette Williams of UKRC and Paul Jackson of the Engineering and Technology Board (ETB) will discuss the importance of equality in fuelling economic recovery at a series of Party Conference fringe events organised by UKRC.

Speaking at last week's Labour fringe event, Paul Jackson highlighted that it will take a staggering 278 years for there to be as many women in engineering careers as there are men at the current rate of increase, and stressed the importance of large scale interventions such as The Big Bang UK Young Scientists and Engineer's Fair. Mr Jackson outlined the need for a wider range of large scale engineering engagement activities which are targeted to appeal to young women as well as to young men.

Annette Williams, who Chaired the event, reinforced this point and went on to outline exactly why more female engineers are needed to expand the engineering talent pool and help the UK to economic recovery, saying:

"Women can and will play a key role in widening the science and engineering talent pool and boosting the UK economy, but we must work together to ensure this is the case by providing inclusive working environments and policies."

Gillian Arnold, Storage Technical Manager of IBM UK Ltd, also addressed the audience on the importance of engaging young women and girls in science and engineering at an early age, whilst Prospective Parliamentary Candidate Nancy Platts addressed the issues of childcare and progressive values at work.

Paul Jackson said:

"It will take another 278 years to achieve equal numbers of men and women in professional engineering at the current rate. This is not good enough. There need to be more large scale engagement initiatives with an increased focus on gender targeting. With engineering set to play a key role in the economic recovery, it is vital to encourage more young people, particularly women, to take key subjects such as physics and maths."

The next debate will take place at the Conservative Party Conference on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October. Annette Williams and Paul Jackson will be joined by Scientist, Nancy Irwin of

York University, and Susan Williams, Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Bolton West.

ENDS

### **Notes to Editors**

**1) Source is The ETB's Engineering UK report. To view full report, visit [www.etechb.co.uk/ db/ documents/5831\\_EngUK08\\_LORES\\_20090401010212.pdf](http://www.etechb.co.uk/db/documents/5831_EngUK08_LORES_20090401010212.pdf)**

### **2) The Engineering and Technology Board (ETB)**

The Engineering and Technology Board (ETB) is an independent organisation that promotes the vital contribution of engineers, engineering and technology in our society. The ETB partners business and industry, government and the wider science and engineering community: producing evidence on the state of engineering, sharing knowledge within engineering and inspiring young people to choose a career in engineering, matching employers' demand for skills. For more information about the ETB please visit [www.etechb.co.uk](http://www.etechb.co.uk).

### **For further information please contact:**

Laura Marsh, ETB PR and Communications Manager, 020 3206 0445 or 07887 943 017  
Malcolm Davies, Press and PR Manager [m.davies@ukrc4setwomen.org](mailto:m.davies@ukrc4setwomen.org) 01274 438884