

Grid for Good

2021 report





Dame Julia Cleverdon

*Board member Youth Futures Foundation
Deputy Chair of Fair Education Alliance*



I have always known that responsible employers can make a real difference to the life chances of young people by focusing on how they recruit, support, train, develop pathways and promote young talent – particularly in the poorest communities. That is why I am excited to see how Grid for Good is developing their work with marginalised young people by pushing back the boundaries and innovating fast to achieve greater scale. This could produce some valuable learning for us all with replicable practice for other responsible employers who want to step up to the challenge for young people.



What is Grid for Good?

A flagship industry programme led by National Grid to deliver a positive impact to socio-economically disadvantaged youth from underserved communities in the UK and US, which is powered by volunteers like you.

With our charity partners working in collaboration with volunteers, Grid for Good provides coaching, training and employment opportunities for young people.



Executive summary

Year 1 has been a success on many fronts. With over **3,000 young people meaningfully impacted** by the programme and nearly 100 of those going on to apply for or secure roles in National Grid alone, the programme has proven itself as a reliable method of positive intervention within our communities as well as accessing a previously untapped and diverse talent pipeline.

This means we are **comfortably ahead of our Year 1 target, building towards our 2030 goal of impacting 22,500 young people.**

The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges that made virtual outreach essential. Although nothing replaces face to face engagement, we found the remote delivery came with the benefit that we could reach a larger audience of young people and more easily put the right volunteering talent in front of the appropriate audience.

Over 1,000 National Grid employees have registered to volunteer, helping deliver over 600 events for candidates, logging over 9,500 volunteering hours. We selected 5 organisations from our supply chain who, since the spring, have further boosted the ranks of volunteers, expanding the breadth of upskilling and types of opportunity we offer young people.

The programme has attracted its fair share of external interest and endorsement. **The UK Cabinet Office has called Grid for Good "industry leading", and we have featured in the Financial Times, Times Radio and the BBC.**

Based on this first year of achievement **we are expanding the Grid for Good portfolio to extend the offering to younger and older audiences**, still from socio-economically underserved groups and communities.

The core programme is evolving to generate improved outcomes; we are aligning our activities based around our geographies where we will be hiring early career roles and support the business in hiring from the community and hiring more diversely.

Grid for Good **Access** is the new name for the original 16-25 upskilling and employability programme, with **Excel** focusing on building a better pipeline of exceptionally talented and diverse graduate level candidates. **Accelerate** is our over 25 arm and finally **Engage** will provide inspirational educational content for 3-15-year-olds to seed the importance of climate change with a focus on our industry.

*Dina Potter
VP & Global Head of Social Impact*

What is Grid for Good?

This is the Candidate Pathway; it is our curriculum and is designed to build confidence and prepare young people to apply for roles in the energy industry.



← Volunteers power Steps 1, 2, 3 and 4 →



Our charity partners provide us with motivated young people from underserved communities and groups and, powered by volunteers from National Grid and our Energy Industry Partners (EIPs) the young people receive upskilling and training to prepare them for potential roles in our industry.

Working with our business units and EIPs, Grid for Good helps prepare the most committed and capable candidates apply for and ultimately secure early career roles

A year in numbers

3,114

young people positively impacted

85

work experience placements

87

candidates applied for job opportunities

1,059

registered volunteers

671

events held

11,891

candidate interactions

9,570

volunteering hours delivered

5

new Energy Industry Partners

30

Early adopter volunteers from Industry partners



Media coverage



Candidate pathway and events

Proven, flexible, and resilient outreach, delivering larger than expected engagement levels

Grid for Good launched during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result the pathway has been adapted to deliver a complete package of upskilling, training, and work experience virtually. This has been more successful than expected, and in many cases has meant engaging with young people who may not have been able to benefit from the initiative either due to logistical or social barriers.

That said now things are slowly and cautiously moving toward a post-pandemic new normal Grid for Good has the opportunity to re-engage with face to face events as we do this in a careful and considered manner.

We have adapted a hybrid way of working, blending virtual and face to face activities depending on what is likely to create the best learner outcome.



What our candidates say

“

Great to receive feedback on our group skills from someone who works in the industry. Lots of interesting topics and ideas were brought up.”

HE Student BSc
@ Loughborough College

“

I enjoyed being able to speak to those directly involved in the sector and hearing their stories.”

Grimsby Institute student

“

Thank you, this resume building workshop really clarified questions I had towards building my resume. It was very encouraging and gave me confidence when listing out my skills.”

Xiomara M
Grid for Good Candidate

“

I really like the program, and the activities that we have done so far. I'm also interested in making a friend join the program.”

Ayrton L
Grid for Good Candidate

“

It was a fantastic and amazing experience that has helped me progress in many things. Thanks for everything.”

Lisbeth R,
Grid for Good Candidate

“

After applying for jobs and not hearing back from them I got disheartened and stopped applying. But after a phone call from Karen from National Grid, it gave me the determination to keep applying and that eventually paid off, when I was offered a job interview which resulted in me getting a full-time job. It was not giving up and determination that got me the job.”

Harry X
Grid for Good Candidate



Some recent success stories

Lewis



Lewis attended many of our events until being spotted on a Team Building exercise which resulted in him landing a trainee contract with our Customer Connection team in London.



Taniya



Taniya worked through the pathway steps and impressed her hosts during her work experience placement so much that she's now been offered a 1 year internship with National Grid



Unique



Until Unique had been involved with Grid for Good she hadn't considered going to college but all that changed when she was able to get the support and guidance with her submissions.



Daniele



Daniele worked through all available events, such as her dedication to getting a role in the energy industry. After landing a role in the customer team she has since moved on to new opportunities.



Gabriel



Gabriel was the first hire due to Grid for Good and after an internship with Corporate Affairs where he worked with the Brand team has become a dynamic member of the Grid for Good team.



Maryam



Having joined Grid for Good as a refugee Maryam quickly got a job as a Network Modeller and has since excelled in her role with GT; was a finalist in the Digital Innovator Award this year.



Colour Key (see the Candidate Pathway on page 5)

 Insights	 121 Mentoring	 Alumni
 Team Building	 Work Experience	
 Upskilling	 Job Opportunities	

Volunteering

Research published by Pilotlight shows that 21% of UK workers volunteer their time and 50% would like to. A similar study in the US by Statista concluded that 25% of US workers volunteer their time.

Engaging with employees and energy industry partners has been crucial to the success of our first year.

Testament to this is having over 1,000 registered volunteers. With our tried and tested self-service portal, employees can book themselves onto opportunities to suit their own work schedule. Moreover using this system begins to give us more advanced data and management information on volunteering in our workplace than we've ever had access to before.

As the programme evolves and expands there is the need to be able to secure access to groups of volunteers more likely to volunteer at team based events and away days.

Moreover our data shows that we are not getting the same level of engagement from field employees as office based ones. We have started a road tour to understand how to better engage our field based colleagues.



Volunteering hours

77%

annual target achieved



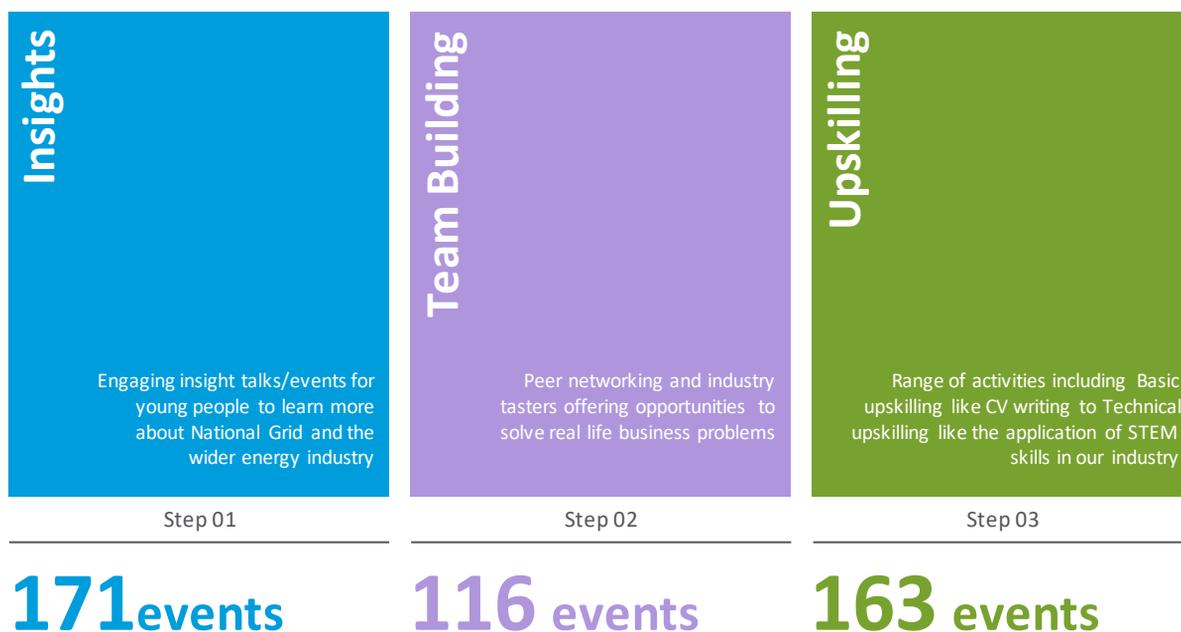
Registered volunteers

43%

Of our 2030 target already achieved in Year 1

Large number of volunteering opportunities all year round

Part of the challenge is to make volunteering opportunities which people can fit around busy work schedules. As the diagram below shows, we have well over an event for every day of the year to make sure as many people can be included as possible.



What our volunteers say

“

I think the session was very well run, and I loved that it wasn't filled with long talking sessions that would have put the students off somewhat. The mix of multimedia, mentitasks and industry volunteers appears to be a great method and I think you should keep that balance going forward and perhaps find ways to add to it.
Over all a great session and I'm glad I could help and would be willing to do it again.”

Nnaemeka

Graduate Power Systems Engineer

“

Although this type of event usually falls outside my comfort zone, I felt the session was structured in such a way that helped to put myself and Adam at ease. The use of the multimedia tasks helped to break up the session and flowed very well. Also, breaking up the guest speaker sessions helped. I would be happy to help again in the future I would be more than happy to help out again in the future.”

John

Substations Supervisory Engineer

“

Happy; part of the neighbourhood; impressed with our upcoming workforce.”

Dana Simone

NG Volunteer

“

Volunteering with Grid for Good has a great impact on communities. Can't wait to do as many as possible as soon as possible!”

Matteo Urella

NG Volunteer

“

Working with Harry has been a real pleasure and as you will see from the copy of the text he sent me today, he is an amazing person.

I hope all the others have been as successful as Harry – Thank you for linking us together.

Harry has a great future ahead of him.”

Karen Lloyd

NG Volunteer

“

I love helping young adults to advance. It is a great feeling to see them learn and grow and I had a great time talking to the group!”

Srividya Madhusdhan

NG Volunteer

Charity partners

This programme is only where it is thanks to our incredible charity partners.

A large part of our ability to work through challenging conditions, with no safe way of conducting face to face outreach, was down to our charity partners operational knowledge and their standing in their communities.

Our charity partners are essential to the scale of impact we achieve with Grid for Good. Not only do they provide us with a diverse talent pipeline by pre-selecting the most motivated candidates, they also provide wraparound support for those young people should they have issues or difficulties because of their situation.

Charity partners are a source of expertise in workforce development as well as safeguarding, ensuring that both the volunteer and the candidate can interact with the relevant protections in place. With their know-how of delivering programmes like Grid for Good we are able to fine tune our efforts; the charities are the essential link between our industry underserved communities and allow us to support longer term workforce development and community investment goals.

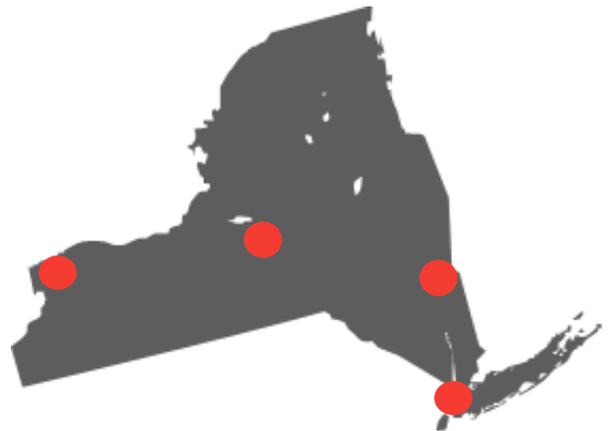


Charity partners

We aim to secure over 3,500 young people through the programme next year and build a greater volume of those candidates applying for roles because of Grid for Good.



In the UK we are piloting a selection of Hubs, centred around business recruitment needs and major projects; working in conjunction with partners and communities to build robust and diverse talent pipelines.



In addition to existing partners in Central and Downstate, Grid for Good is looking to expand operations with partners in East and West New York in Year 2.

Energy industry partners

Grid for Good has been working closely with our Global Procurement team, exploring opportunities to support the National Grid Supply Chain Sustainability Charter, and contribute significantly to community outreach, skills development and local employment activities.

BOND

MORRISON
Energy Services

linxon

 **Stantec**

 **HALLEN**

Our 5 pioneering energy industry partners have made an immediate impact. Their involvement greatly increases candidates' access to opportunity, while Grid for Good provides these partners with a ready-made motivated, engaged, diverse talent pool who are better placed to become active in the energy workforce every step of the pathway they complete.

Thanks to the support from the business, especially the Global and UK Procurement teams we have secured these pioneering initial partners but we will need more. It is our hope that the inclusion of Grid for Good in the Supply Chain Sustainability Charter will increase engagement across our industry.

“

Grid for Good enables us to invest in future generations of the workforce. This fantastic initiative helps show our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.”

Kathleen Freitas - BOND
Director of People Strategies

“

I found the session very interesting and enjoyed being part of the panel. The questions took me back to the start of my career and it was good to contribute from a HR function.”

Sheetal Banggar - Linxon
Learning & Development Lead, HR BP

“

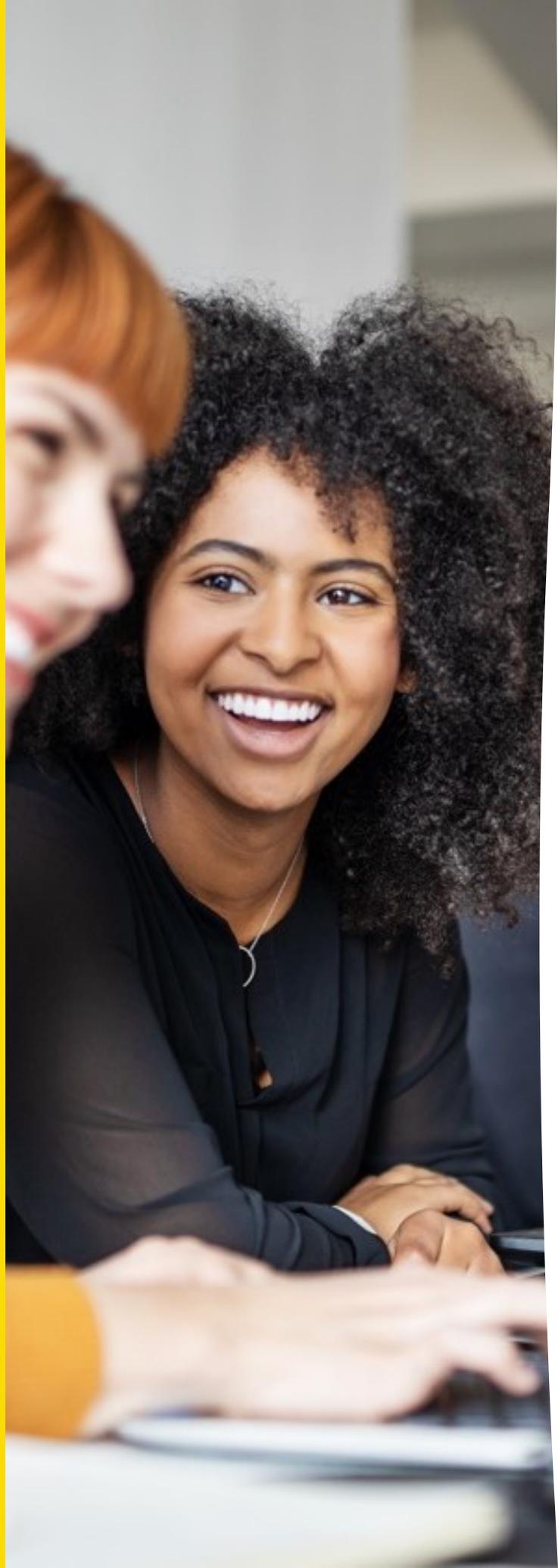
We are very impressed by Grid for Good... Our involvement has already created many different conversations about diversity and inclusion within our business. We really look forward to seeing some of the young people enjoying careers in the energy sector and at Stantec in the future.”

Matthew Raybould - Stantec
Technical Director – Energy & Resources

Year 2

Following a successful first year, as our programme matures, we have an opportunity to improve outcomes for young people even further. This means getting more candidates applying for jobs with us and our energy industry partners. For this to be successful we will need a better understanding of the immediate and mid-term roles to support the delivery of our net zero and diversity commitments.

Grid for Good has proven, in its debut year, that we can stimulate young people to consider beginning their careers in energy. And it doesn't stop there; to understand the need for so many future roles in the push to net zero Grid for Good has a larger role to play in inspiring younger audiences to take STEM subjects further than they may have done with no intervention. We will utilise Grid for Good as a vehicle to showcase what National Grid and our peers are doing to secure a more sustainable future for us all and to become an ever more active community focused organisation by extending our programme to cover two new cohorts Engage which focuses on ages 3-15 and Accelerate which covers those aged 25+.



Grid for Good portfolio in Year 2

for **engage** ages 3-15

Providing engaging and inspiring content to introduce young people to the world of energy and sustainable futures. Using different media and teaching aids such as radio shows, audio stories and later this year the launch of the proposed Grid for Good electric bus, we want to inspire the next generation of talent into our industry.

for **access** ages 16-25

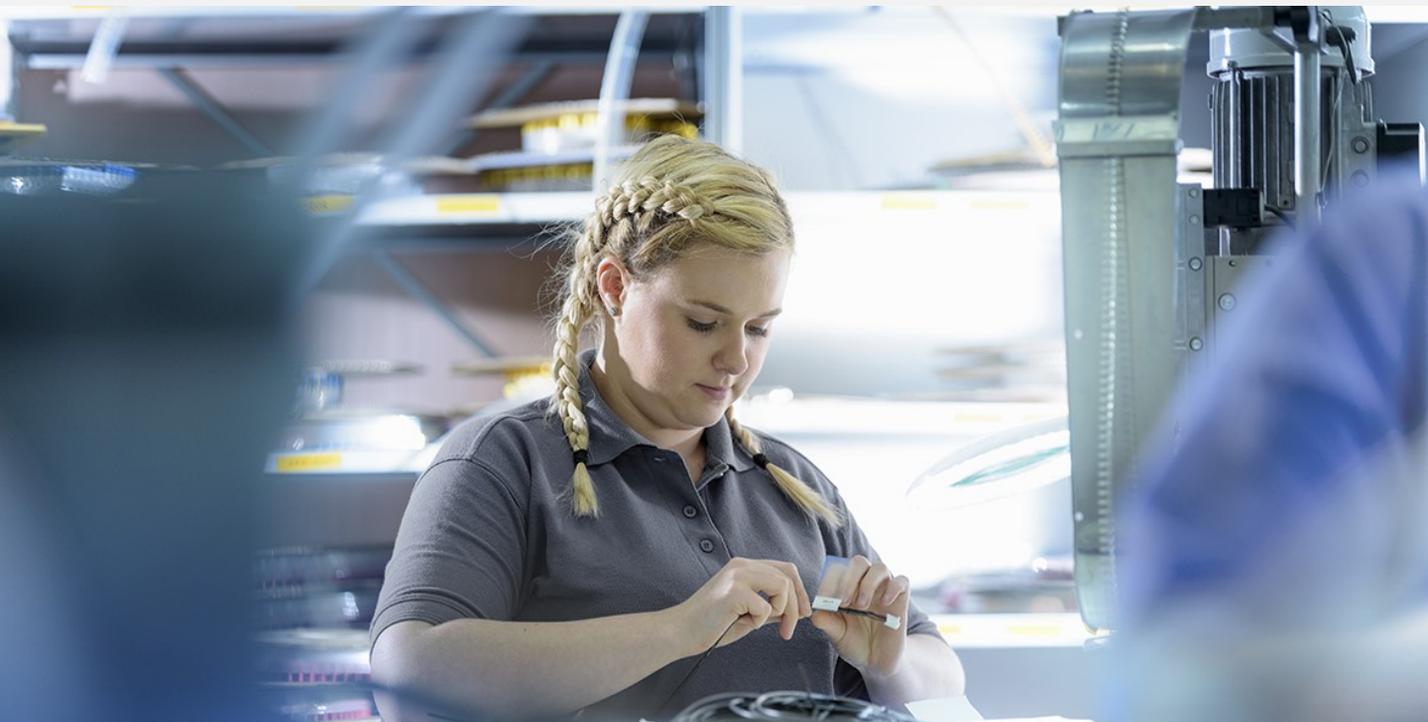
Our original charity powered initiative is ever more focused on helping the most under-served young people in our communities with upskilling to develop their employment opportunities in National Grid and the energy sector. In the year ahead we having a laser focus on jobs working with our industry partners for entry level roles

for **excel** ages 16-25

Our STEM focused pathway to get the best diverse young minds from underserved communities into graduate and early career opportunities with National Grid and our energy industry partners

for **accelerate** ages 25+

Our newest programme aims to work in partnership with HR, BU's, government, local authorities, and the education sector to implement practical routes to learning to create the skills we need via a localised hub model. Here we are predominantly targeting shock-unemployed people over 25



“ There are a number of employability programmes which claim to be employer-led and engaging for students and few fulfil that brief. This ‘Grid for Good’ day was genuinely informed and insightful and proved engaging and entertaining for the students.

Industry input was from someone with both valuable experience and expertise and also high-level communication skills. The programme focused well on key issues affecting students, employers and the country as a whole and had the flexibility to adapt to their aspirations and expressed ambitions along the way. From an observer perspective, I really enjoyed it and saw the value for the students in terms of credibility, tangible, effective guidance and introduction to the variety of opportunities in the industry.

”

John

Curriculum Manager

Engineering Higher Education

Loughborough College

grid  for good

nationalgrid