

PROF. ALAN BANKS YOUNG ENGINEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

FINALIST: Vaishnavi Shankar

Vaishnavi Shankar is a Research Engineer within GKN Aerospace's Composites Technology team at the Global Technology Centre. Having joined GKN as an intern, she progressed to Research Specialist before becoming a Research Engineer, reflecting her strong technical capability and consistent performance.

Vaishnavi leads process simulation for advanced composite manufacturing and is recognised as a specialist in this field. Her work has contributed to successful technology demonstrations and helped teams achieve right-first-time manufacturing outcomes. She combines simulation, analysis and practical manufacturing knowledge to deliver solutions across complex engineering projects.

She has undertaken extensive on-the-job training in automated composite manufacturing, forming, trimming and resin injection. She also mentors GKN apprentices and supports degree apprentices as a placement supervisor, receiving exceptional feedback for the guidance she provides.

Vaishnavi has made a significant contribution to STEM engagement at GKN, helping shape the UK Global Technology Centre's STEM strategy and leading outreach activities. She is also an inspiring role model and mentor for early-career engineers.

A particularly notable achievement was her contribution to the rapid development and manufacture of a full-scale technology demonstrator for a key customer. Working to an exceptionally demanding timeframe, Vaishnavi rapidly developed expertise in simulation and used it to inform manufacturing decisions, helping deliver a right-first-time component.

She has also gone beyond her immediate responsibilities by leading work exploring recycled carbon fibre. She engaged with GKN sites and senior teams, helped establish a supply of surplus material for evaluation and delivered an important milestone three months ahead of schedule.

Vaishnavi combines technical excellence, initiative and a strong commitment to sustainability, STEM and her colleagues. Her progression, achievements and willingness to support others demonstrate the qualities of an outstanding young engineer.



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