

# Participatory Research Fund Project Creating Equal Opportunities for Essex

Dr Sunrita Dhar Bhattacharjee, Sarah Strachan, Dr Gregory Allen

Faculty of Business & Law



## Overview:

In 2021/2022, in partnership with Essex County Council, a group of ARU academics at FBL and students conducted research as a part of SHoKE Programme. The researchers identified key barriers preventing females from entering the construction industry and other growth sectors in Essex and provided recommendations to tackle each of these challenges. The research recommendations were taken into practice and led to positive changes in ECC's approach to engagement with their stakeholders. An ongoing dialogue uncovered a need for further research related to influencing the choice of young people when it comes to their careers.

## Aim and objectives:

- Generate recommendations on how best to influence career choice of young people particularly in primary and secondary schools in the region
- Help to ensure that the Go-Construct information reaches young females and proactively encourages them into the industry
- Work up a brief on a pilot project promoting the industry to young people in primary schools

## Funding of £9,640 was used for:

- Research Fellow support
- Research Assistant support
- Venue hire
- Travel expenses
- Transcription
- Editing service

## Stakeholders involved:

Essex County Council (ECC)

Local Schools

Construction Industry

School Careers Advisory Services

Training Board

Women into Construction

Go Construct

Construction Companies



**Do you want to know more or be involved?**

## Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement elements:

- A half day face-to-face focus group discussion with stakeholders to address gender inequality in key growth areas and key issues related to influencing young people into construction careers
- Co-creating an accessible toolkit for running career workshops at schools promoting the industry to young learners
- An online survey to collect the data from young learners with regards to their career perspectives and aspirations

## Research outcomes:

- Further consolidation of the public engagement work and the existing relationships between ARU, Essex County Council (ECC) and other stakeholders
- Co-creation of a plan for coordinated action to engage with policy makers, academics and the key stakeholders in the construction sector
- A series of workshops in different schools in the region to increase the awareness of construction career opportunities amongst the youth, particularly young girls. ARU female students of the Faculty of Science and Engineering will be invited to join the ARU researchers in coproducing, delivering the workshops and acting as mentors
- Participation in Chelmsford Science Festival in October 2023
- Academic publication



**Email us on: [ceoe@aru.ac.uk](mailto:ceoe@aru.ac.uk)**