



My story...

Adriana Laguna

Low carbon technologies & external engagement
senior manager, UK Power Networks

A gifted engineer and leader, Adriana Laguna uses her unique combination of industry know-how and policy development experience to drive innovation in energy distribution and to help bridge the gap between technical experts and decision makers.

Adriana joined UK Power Networks in 2012 to lead the commercial side of an innovative project aimed at making it easier for renewable energy to come onto the electricity network, before moving on to run a project investigating how to make London one of the world's leading cities in the move to the green economy. Last year she led the delivery of the first multipurpose grid scale storage in the country. She now helps lead the Innovation team, who are delivering projects that are preparing the energy distribution network for the future.

Adriana speaks passionately about the value that women can bring to the energy sector: "Women are good at building relationships and, as the future of our industry will involve a lot of interaction and sharing of experiences and ideas, I do think we need more women to bring their capabilities to this sector. I've used these engagement skills in my role and it has definitely had a positive impact on my career and the work I do at UK Power Networks."

"Most environmental problems have a very technical or scientific background to them but the decision takers, the policy makers and the investors involved in a project don't necessarily understand or need to understand the technical factors fully. What drives me is being able to bridge that gap between the technical and the decision making."

Having completed a degree in engineering and a masters in public policy, Adriana is one of only a few people who are able to manage highly complex engineering projects and communicate that work to laypeople without a technical background.

As a result, she often acts as a translator between the various stakeholders of the projects she works on. She is often called upon to lead the company's engagement with policy officials from the government and Greater London Authority, as well as working with bodies such as Transport for London (TfL), to help them achieve their ambitious targets for electric vehicles.

Adriana strongly advocates a growth in the number of women in the energy sector, describing how an increase in women in the industry would make a positive difference: “Around me there are extremely capable women. The more of us there are the less complicated it is to demonstrate our contributions. There are a lot of highly trained women in the industry – enough of them to have an impact – but I think we do still need to work on building our confidence.”

“I would encourage all women to have confidence and to believe in themselves. If you aim to do something, and are as prepared and educated as your male counterparts, you’re as capable as any man to do any job, and you shouldn’t be discouraged.”

Reflecting on the future of the industry, Adriana is pragmatic about the complexities of needing to provide energy which balances sustainability, affordability and security of supply. Adriana argues that women have a crucial role to play in bringing the diverse stakeholders together to achieve this: “These challenges have a political, technical and social element and I think women have the creativity required to solve some of these complex problems. Women can bring different opinions, give it a different twist and shine another light on helping find the solutions to these very intricate issues.”

As she continues to work on the future of electricity, Adriana strongly encourages more women to get involved and get in touch with her if interested in learning more about the challenges the industry faces.