Why are female engineers needed?

Professor Alison Noble presenting at the Women in Engineering High Tea, 2015

What inspired you to become an engineer?
I was fascinated by robotics and AI as a teenager (the last time it was in fashion!)

How did you get started in engineering?
I am a graduate of the Department of Engineering Science. I specialised in electrical engineering and information engineering on the undergraduate degree. I stayed on to do a PhD in computer vision in the Robotics Research Group. At the time I was fascinated by the relationship between human perception and computer perception, a theme that remains a strong interest and theme of my research today.

What is your research area?
I work in biomedical image analysis, a sub-field of biomedical engineering. My research is inter-disciplinary, at the interface of engineering and medicine, and concerns machine learning applied to medical ultrasound imaging to make ultrasound devices easier to use by non-specialist clinical professionals.

What is an average day on the job like?
Academic life is varied and combines teaching, research, entrepreneurship, and citizenship.

It means the job is diverse and busy, and no two days are the same.

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What key attributes and skills do you think help you in your role?
Empathy, creativity, perseverance.

What’s your top tip for girls or women considering an engineering career?
Too many people worry about choosing the type of engineering they study. It doesn’t really matter.

Choose it if you want to learn how mathematics, science and creative design can be applied to make the world a better place.

Professor Alison Noble was elected as a Fellow of The Royal Society in 2017 in recognition for her ground-breaking biomedical image analysis research, which has advanced knowledge of how to automatically extract clinically-useful information from ultrasound scans.

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