

Inspiring a younger generation into STEM and the Aviation Industry

Our goal: Inspiring young people to explore careers in STEM and aviation, to support and encourage their future career choices.

How can you help? By sharing your story

Name & job role:	Maria Rueda Managing Director CAA International
What did you enjoy doing when you were younger?	Building things, being outdoors, sports
What were your favourite subjects in school? Why?	Science, technology, languages. I was always curious to know why things happen, specially why aircraft could fly
What or who inspired you to study these?	My grandad and my dad are both engineers and I could see how much they could do with their hands and their intellect, I wanted to be like them plus I wanted to fly and to know how flying works
Did you do work experience? Where and did it help in choosing your career path?	Yes. I had a four-month placement in the Air Traffic Control Tower at Palma Airport when I finished my Aeronautical Engineer degree. It was an amazing experience and it gave me my first insight into the aviation world after University
What was your first job?	I started to work for Accenture in a project to support the maintenance of the Spanish Air Force aircrafts, working with other companies in a bunker at the Ministry of Defence ...
How did you arrive where you are in your career?	I love aviation and will always work in this sector. I started with more technical jobs and moved into project management and managerial jobs to be able to influence strategy and direction in the aviation sector



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What do you love about your current job?	CAA International's purpose is to improve aviation standards around the world, so this is an amazing thing to do, as aviation brings people together and supports economic growth around the world. It definitely drives my energy and enthusiasm and feels extremely purposeful.
What were the biggest challenges/barriers you had to overcome?	As a woman engineer working in a male dominated sector and in countries where there are very few women in management/technical positions (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman), I have found some challenging situations. Being confident about my abilities and respectful of other cultures has always allowed me to do my job properly.
Who have you looked up to and why?	My father and grandfather, they are both proper engineers, solving problems and being very handymen
What is your ambition?	To keep working to improve aviation standards around the world and to inspire young generations to work in aviation. It is an amazing sector that allows you to travel, meet other cultures and to contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Goals (end poverty and hunger between them).
What is the best advice you were given?	Never give up, trust yourself
What advice would you give a younger you?	Everything is possible. There are no barriers if you really want something and are ready to put the effort and the commitment.

Any additional comments:



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Thank you for sharing your journey.