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## PRESS RELEASE

### Magherafelt and Dungannon companies working towards gender balance in STEM careers

Dr. Evelyn Collins CBE, Chief Executive of the Equality Commission, has welcomed a commitment by two of Northern Ireland's major employers to encourage more women to take up scientific and technical jobs in its workforce.

Henry Brothers, Magherafelt, and Terex GB, Dungannon, have been working with the Equality Commission and the STEM Business Group to improve the gender balance in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) industries, and have both signed up to the STEM Equality Charter.



Evelyn Collins said: "We're really pleased to be working with these two dynamic companies. I congratulate them both on their commitment to taking steps to recruit and retain more women in this field.

"The current under-representation of women in scientific and technical jobs is not simply a gender equality issue it is a broader economic issue that has huge consequences for our future prosperity and growth."

Dr Collins said that the Equality Commission can offer practical support and guidance to any STEM employer who wants to get involved. "We would like to encourage more STEM companies to sign up to the Charter. The business case for employing more women is clear and for women themselves, STEM posts are generally both well paid and interesting.

"Working with our partners in the STEM Business Group, we have established a STEM Employers Equality Network (SEEN) where advice and guidance and examples of good practice on workplace gender equality issues can be shared. If you'd like to go to a Network meeting, you are interested in signing up to the Charter or would just like more information, visit our website [www.equalityni.org/STEM](http://www.equalityni.org/STEM) or get in touch with our Advice and Compliance team on 028 9089 0888."

**Photo Caption:**

*(left-right)* Jennifer Cruickshank, Group HR Assistant Manager at Henry Brothers; Gillian Harkness, quality engineer at Terex GB; Dr Evelyn Collins CBE, Chief Executive, Equality Commission; Lorraine Stewart, design engineer at Terex GB, Wendy Armstrong, civil engineer at Henry Brothers and Sharon Martin, IT Service Manager at Terex GB signing the STEM Charter. Photo taken at Terex's new warehouse outside Dungannon, a project recently completed by Henry Brothers.

**Notes for editors**

- To date, 37 NI employers have signed up to the STEM Charter. For more details about the STEM initiative and to view a copy of the STEM Charter visit: [www.equalityni.org/STEM](http://www.equalityni.org/STEM)
- For more information on STEM strategy see [DEL website](#)
- For employers seeking to attract women into STEM careers the Sex Discrimination Order allows some positive action measures. For example, they may provide encouragement or special training for one sex to take up work in areas where they are under-represented. The Equality Commission can advise employers and training providers on appropriate and lawful positive action.
- The next meetings of the STEM Employer Equality Networks are in Belfast on 24 September and Derry on 1st October. The topic is unconscious bias.