

PRESS RELEASE



Media & Communications
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NEW YOUTH PROGRAMME FOR RAF'S CENTENARY TAKES-OFF IN WEST MIDLANDS

Over 240 students from schools across the Birmingham area have taken part in an event marking the launch of the RAF100 Youth & STEM programme in England.

To demonstrate the RAF's commitment to use its centenary to inspire the next generation, the expanded youth engagement programme is expected to reach up to 2 million students 9-15 years old.

The aim is to build interest in science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) careers. This is intended to benefit the wider UK economy against the background of a serious skills shortage at the national level. The Scotland programme was launched in Glasgow in Sept 2017 and will launch in Wales in early 2018.

The students attending the event hosted by the RAF Museum at Cosford were given a taster of STEM activities including coding, building rocket cars and aircraft riveting by RAF STEM Ambassadors and RAF Museum staff.

Run throughout the centenary year, the programme includes 1000 STEM boxes distributed to schools, 100 curriculum-based school activity days, residential courses at RAF bases and a new Air Researcher Badge for Scouts UK. All of this is complemented by a range of historical initiatives following partnerships with the First World War Charity *Never Such Innocence*, the Historical Association and the Institute of Physics.

Air Vice-Marshal Sue Gray, Air Officer Commanding Number 38 Group and head of the RAF's Engineer branch, said: **"For almost 100 years, the RAF has been a leading force in technological advancement and innovation. Today, through our youth engagement programme, the RAF is looking to the next generation for innovative ideas to shape our second century and ensure that we will always be first to the future".**

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An online version of this press release is available at www.raf.mod.uk/raf100/press-room/

Notes to the Editor:

RAF100 is a nationwide campaign to mark 100 years since the formation of the world's first independent air force. The education initiatives are funded largely through LIBOR funds granted by HM Treasury.

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