

# I Am a Volunteer and I Do...

## Oluwaseyi Asa



### What activities have you undertaken as part of your volunteering?

I am always looking for opportunities to volunteer, making use of my skills and experiences to contribute to communities around me. This had led me in the past to volunteer as the events coordinator for my universities Women's Engineering Society (WES); become a STEM ambassador, and a volunteer Math Tutor. These roles have enabled me to promote careers in STEM to younger pupils, particularly girls.

I have recently taken up post as the INCOSE UK Early Careers Forum (ECF) Events Co-Ordinator. Within this role, I am responsible for the planning of events for the ECF and working with the Annual Systems Engineering Conference (ASEC) events committee to support this year's annual conference.

### What Originally inspired you to volunteer for INCOSE UK?

During my time at university, I had the opportunity to undertake two summer internships which introduced me to the field of Systems Engineering (SE). This led me to joining a graduate scheme at my company as a Systems Engineer. As a novice to SE, the opportunity to better understand what Systems Engineering is all about while promoting SE to individuals at varying stages of their career is my main reason for volunteering for INCOSE UK. The position of events coordinator also enables me to volunteer and develop skills I have acquired from previous volunteering roles.

### What do you feel you get out of your volunteering?

Volunteering is a great opportunity to develop skills that might take later years to acquire. Through my various past volunteering experiences, I have developed my leadership skills, as well as the knowledge to effectively communicate with a variety of audiences. I've gained the knowledge required to manage budgets, facilitate events & sessions. I have had the opportunity to meet and work with different individuals, enabling me to broaden my network both inside and outside my company. My current role in the INCOSE UK ECF has enabled me to broaden my knowledge about Systems Engineering and its many disciplines. It has also allowed me to engage with and help support the development of members of the ECF.

### Do you have any advice or feedback to offer anyone who is considering volunteering?

**Pick a cause that matters to you.** My passion for education and all things STEM, has been the driving factor to the various volunteering roles I've taken up. Doing something that matters to you, allows you to feel enthusiastic about it and more willing to engage with people with similar interests.

**Organization is key.** Volunteering is rewarding but sometimes it is important to plan your time carefully. As this is a personal commitment of your time, be realistic to what you can achieve. Starting small and then building from there is always best.

**Little still makes a difference.** As my previous point highlights, you can start small and it absolutely still count and can most definitely still make a huge impact. I think sometimes people think to volunteer, you have to do something big and spend hours and hours. However, an hour a month to a cause you're passionate about is just as impactful as a day a month.

**Just do it.** Not to steal the Nike slogan but I think we tend to spend more time thinking about volunteering and getting worked up about it. The best thing to do is to try it out and I'm positive you'll see the reward and benefits.