

# I Am a Volunteer and I Do...

## Thomas Aldous



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

I am the groups liaison for the Early Careers Forum at INCOSE UK, providing the link between us and the other working groups. As a committee, we try to promote systems engineering to early careers professionals and connect their enthusiasm with industry experience. A lot of the work this year has been centered around the INCOSE Handbook Series. We have organised monthly interactive webinars with industry leaders to share their knowledge, with each webinar giving a real-world flavour of a handbook chapter. I have also recently taken over the mantle from Beth, a previous contributor to this series, in managing the UK outreach for the EMEA WSEC in April 2023, where the theme is "Engineering a Sustainable World". Hopefully, unlike Beth, I get to go!

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

My involvement stemmed from attending the ASEC in 2021, where I attended several interesting sessions, including those held by the Early Careers Forum, which I found invaluable. I had recently shifted career slightly and wanted to fully embed myself in the Systems Engineering world and thought there would be no better way than volunteering with INCOSE UK. I also believe that systems skills will be vital to defining and tackling many of the issues we face today, and I would love to be able to help bring Systems Engineering awareness to as many people as possible.

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

I have always loved volunteering at STEM activities, trying to inspire up the minds of future innovators. The Big Bang Fair was an early career highlight. Volunteering at INCOSE is slightly different to past STEM roles and allows me to develop my skills and connect with other like-minded people. It has given me exposure to how SE is applied in so many different domains and learn from, and interact with, the people that apply it. Being able to contribute to the EMEA WSEC has connected me with INCOSE members from across the globe, and their enthusiasm to make a difference is inspiring.

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

If you have got this far into my profile, you must volunteer! Volunteering takes you outside of your day to day working life and gives you the opportunity to make a difference to the industry you work in and shape its future. It also provides you with organic networking opportunities and connections, which could become priceless as you develop your own career. Everyone in the organisation has been extremely welcoming and supportive throughout. Ultimately, I think you get out what you put in as a volunteer, so give it a go!