



Claire Ford of the Smallpeice Trust gives us a brief insight into the impact and success of their programmes

What is the Smallpeice Trust?

The Smallpeice Trust is a highly respected and professionally executed programme of tiered schemes to promote engineering as a career to young people. The core programme consists of subsidised training courses held each year at residential schools for students ranging from the age of 14 through 17 and a Gap Year for pre-university students. Hands-on project work is a vital element of each course.

A strong interface is maintained with industry, education and professional bodies who help to support, promote and develop these courses. The Trust has a reputation for developing and delivering courses to a high standard and has built on these relationships to extend the programme in 2004, and provides a number of tailored or specialised courses.

The core Smallpeice courses are affiliated to **The Royal Academy of Engineering Best** programme. Students receive expert tuition in a variety of engineering-related and management skills presented by consultants and industry specialists.

The pathway to a career in engineering

Over 400 young people have had the opportunity to experience engineering first hand with The Smallpeice Trust this summer through a series of four day residential training courses held at UK universities.

During the last twelve months the core programme for 14 to 17 year-old students has increased to include several specialised courses.

The Marine Technology Experience, held at Southampton University, sponsored by Lloyds Register, supported by **The Royal Navy and Young Engineers**, encourages students to investigate real-life specifications of ship building, whilst taking part in marine technology projects and visits, which this year included the Oceanography centre.

Following a successful pilot, the **Electronic Engineering** course proved to be even more popular, and will run again in April 2004 at the University of Leicester. Designed to inspire and encourage young students to consider a career in electronics, the course includes an introduction to Analogue and Digital electronics, and a 'solder and keep' workshop. The team challenge is to design and build a buggy using sensors and remote control to negotiate a circuit, ending in a race against time. Great Fun!

March saw the introduction of another specialised residential course, **Smallpeice Materials Experience**. Under the guidance of professionals, 40 students will have the opportunity on the next course in January 2004 to develop their knowledge and skills in the application of materials science – from theory to reality - through a special partnership between The Trust and The University of Oxford and supported by Oxford Materials.

Other specialised courses are being developed for 2004, which will be announced in due course.

For Year 9/S2 students Smallpeice will present the **Engineering Experience** course twice in April 2004 to meet the high demand for places. This course is the starting point for many students who wish to find out about a career in engineering, they learn from taking part in practical "design and make" projects with graduate engineers from industry, enjoy a challenging experience and make new friends. Because of the popularity of this course, early application is strongly advised to avoid disappointment.

Smallpeice courses provide curriculum enrichment of maths, science and technology through practical application of engineering design and associated skills, together with management and business skills for personal and professional development.



Teacher Participation

All Smallpeice courses are fully supervised with the help of teachers, many of whom continue to say how much they also benefit from attending the wide variety of lectures and workshops on the residential courses. Each teacher on each course receives **gift vouchers to the value of £200** and travel expenses. Smallpeice are always pleased to hear from teachers who would like to take part in any Smallpeice residential course.

The Smallpeice Engineering Gap Year

For students of engineering this really is the pinnacle of gap years. It provides a unique combination of study, language tuition, travel and work experience in Europe. The course is intensive, demanding and great fun – not only an important stepping stone in the career development of young engineers but a truly memorable experience to carry through life.

The latest intake of students, who were accepted onto the **Smallpeice Engineering Gap Year 2003/2004**, have just commenced the course. They spent the first week teambuilding in Devon. The students had the opportunity to get to know each other and test their strengths and weaknesses against other members of the group. They are now on their three months of academic study at Seale-Hayne, Plymouth University. Here they will be developing their knowledge, understanding and skills of engineering and management. In the second phase of the course the students will go on to develop their language skills on a four week course at a language school in Chambéry, Munich or Barcelona. The tuition they receive is generally to a conversational level, but students who have an appropriate language qualification may progress to technical level.

The final phase is a three-month **industrial work placement**. The students will undertake a placement with one of our European Industrial contacts, which are established in nine European countries. Some English speaking placements can be arranged for students who are less confident in a foreign language. The work will involve more than “shadowing”, as students will be involved in projects as they arise and be expected to contribute to company activities.

The Students

Nineteen-year-old student, **Richard Beardmore** (right), was one of only 30 students selected from across the UK to participate in the scheme last year. Following on from the academic study, Richard spent three months polishing up his language skills at Deutsch in Deutschland Institute in Munich before spending three months at engineering company KUKA Schweissanlagen GmbH in Augsburg, Germany.

The programme is run annually over a 7-month period, spanning from September to May, finishing well before students take up a deferred place at university. Applications are invited from A level, CSYS higher, BTEC or equivalent students who will complete their examinations in summer 2004 and who wish to take a gap year by deferring their entry to university on an engineering-related degree course. Applicants must be 18 years old at the start of the gap year.

Applications are now being received for consideration on the gap year commencing September 2004. To make it happen for your students, or to register an interest in supervising on a course, please telephone **The Smallpeice Trust** on **01926 333200** or visit: www.smallpeicetrust.org.uk

The Smallpeice Trust

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▲ Team building exercises not for the fainthearted!



▲ Student Richard Beardmore who was selected to take part in the scheme

