

RENEWABLES ENGINEERING

NAME: ELISE GANENDRA

Ruby Jones
Director, Qila Energy

••The renewables sector has grown massively in the last few years, with most of the excitement coming from small companies like ours. Working in such a small, responsive team means people get to learn a wide range of skills from an early stage in their careers. Elise is one of several people we rely on, using her own initiative to identify problems, find solutions and communicate with customers. ••



I see engineering as an opportunity to combine science with creativity. The Arkwright Engineering Scholarship, not only gave me greater insight into engineering, but the experience also helped me to build my confidence and understand my potential as an engineer. I therefore set my goals and applied to Cambridge University, where I spent two years studying general engineering before specialising in electrical and electronic engineering. I found the concept of renewable energy and climate change fascinating and for my fourth year project I worked on the concept of harvesting vibrational energy to replace batteries in micro-sensors.

My interest in energy led me to take up a role as a power systems engineer with the engineering consultancy Parsons Brinkerhoff and then later at Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM). My primary role was to build models to analyse the electricity network. At SKM, I modelled and analysed the electricity network in St Helena, a tiny island located in the South Atlantic Ocean. The government were planning on building a new wind farm to reduce their reliance on expensive diesel fuel and to build their first airport to stimulate tourism to the island. I loved being able to identify the problems and then solve them as well!

Being in a consulting role, I was given the opportunity to work on a variety of projects that introduced me to various elements of the electricity industry, both from a technical and commercial aspect. This included everything from network planning to supporting business plans for utility companies or working on regulatory policy. My role took me to some lovely places around the world such as Oman, the UAE, Australia and Malaysia.

I was then approached by a start-up company, Qila Energy who develop renewable biogas generation plants which convert agricultural waste into biogas that can then be directly injected into the gas network or combusted in a CHP to produce electricity for export back to the grid. Although this was a completely new sector for me, it was an exciting challenge and I decided to take up the opportunity. I was amazed at the steps required to take something from paper and turn it into reality. My team is involved with every stage of the project, from the initial contact with the farmers, to the funding with the investors, then construction, commissioning and finally operation, and so there is never a dull moment. Of course, nothing beats seeing a finished and working product!

PERSONAL PROFILE:

Scholarship Awarded
2003 – 2005

ARKWRIGHT SPONSOR:

Lloyd's Register Foundation

A LEVELS:

Physics, Maths,
Further Maths, Electronics,
Design and Technology

AS-LEVEL:

Chemistry

UNIVERSITY:

University of Cambridge,
MEng in Electrical and
Electronic Engineering,
HEC Paris Business School
MBA (Master of Business
Administration)

CURRENT POSITION:

Grid Manager, Qila Energy



Qila Energy

Arkwright Scholarships Trust
Holly House
74 Upper Holly Walk
LEAMINGTON SPA
Warwickshire, CV32 4JL

Telephone 01926 333210
Facsimile 01926 333212
Email enquiries@arkwright.org.uk
www.arkwright.org.uk
www.arkwright.org.uk/alumni

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