

A SCIENTIST just like me



Rebecca Harding
Software engineer

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Hi there! I am Rebecca Harding – A software engineer



Where do I work?

I work at the Science and Technology Facilities Council. We do lots of different types of scientific experiments and research and invent lots of useful technology.

What did I like doing when I was at school?

I liked maths and science best, but I also enjoyed art and music. At secondary school, I discovered computer programming and I loved it!

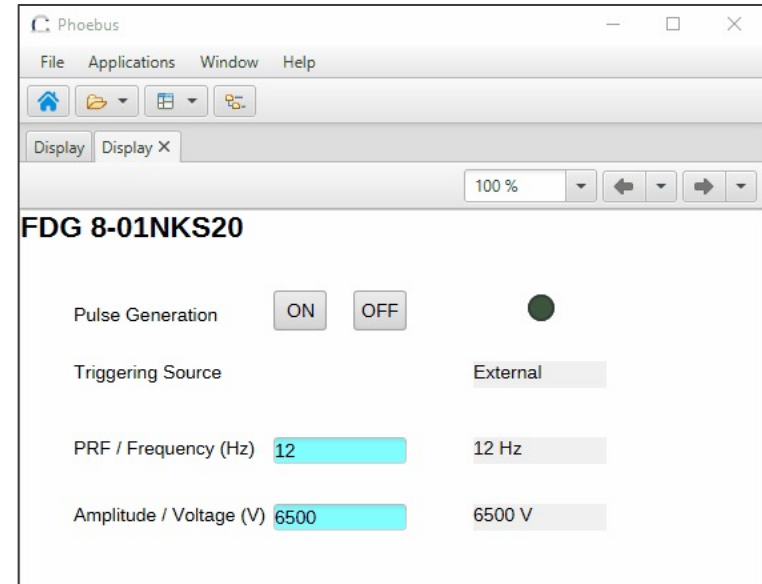
What do I like doing in my spare time?

I really like music – I used to play violin in my school's string group, and now I'm in a choir. I also like rock climbing and playing video games!

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What do I do as a software engineer?

I write software (computer programs) that help scientists use lasers to do scientific experiments. My computer code lets different bits of the computer system “talk” to each other. I also create user interfaces, which are screens with buttons on them that the scientists can press to control their lasers.



How does what I do make the world a better place?

Once scientists can control all of the different bits of their lasers easily they can do amazing experiments which help lots of different people in lots of different ways, e.g. lasers are used to cut and drill, or to find out more detail about an object

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What I like about my job



I really enjoy programming. I like solving problems and that's what programming is all about. Sometimes, it can be quite difficult to figure out what code I need to write to make the program do the right thing, but when I work it out I'm really happy and excited!

Challenges I have faced

I struggled to choose what I wanted to do after I finished school because I liked lots of different subjects. But I'm really glad I thought hard about what to do because I really enjoyed studying at university and I love my job now!

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If you want to be a software engineer, you need:

- ✱ to **enjoy solving problems** because writing computer programs is a bit like doing puzzles or riddles
- ✱ to be **happy to work on your own or in a group** because sometimes software engineers write different bits of code that they then put together to solve one big problem
- ✱ to **like working on a computer**



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Discussion time

- ✦ Would you like to be a software engineer like Rebecca Harding?

Why? Why not?



- ✦ What skills and interests do you already have that would help you become a software engineer?
- ✦ What new skills and knowledge would you need to develop?

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Rebecca Harding is a STEM ambassador. Click [here](#) to access free STEM support and resources.

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