

MY STORY

# WOMEN IN POWERED ACCESS

## ELE IOANNOU

OPERATIONS MANAGER, MR PLANT HIRE, UK

IPAF's Women in Powered Access initiative invites women of all ages in a variety of professional roles to share their inspiring stories, to help showcase and celebrate the opportunities our industry offers.

**What is your role in powered access?**

I'm company operations manager, and was previously the powered access division manager. My role within this division now is to ensure we are working to and maintaining the IPAF Rental Plus certification. I still oversee this and will continue to do so. The department has 23 members of staff, my role is to support the manager and guide him through the regulations and legislation of powered access.

**How did you come into the industry and what attracted you to it?**

I started my hire industry career 21 years ago but I always saw powered access as out of my reach because it was so specialised, but I always had an interest in it. I was given an opportunity to join AFI where I learned about powered access and gained experience.

**What do you find inspiring about your role?**

Making a positive change in the industry. Not only working in London servicing some incredible sites, including hospitals during the pandemic, but also being part of the IPAF Rental + scheme, and becoming chair of the IPAF Rental+ Committee in 2022. This empowers me to make better changes not just for our business, but for the industry as a whole. Standardising safety and excellence in our industry is the goal, UK and worldwide. And helping my colleagues develop in their own careers. Nothing is more satisfying than seeing someone grow.

**Where do you see yourself in five years, and what do you want to achieve?**

To see all powered access businesses in the UK working to the same minimum standard in safety and compliance and being the benchmark for the rest of the world. On a personal note, I aspire to develop my career to become company operations director.



**What advice would you give to other women in/thinking of entering the industry?** The majority of the industry may be male, but that doesn't mean it's not possible for a woman to achieve her goals. Have courage to stand up and say 'I can be anything I want to be' and let your passion drive your career. When you believe in yourself, others will believe in you. I was told by a teacher at the age of 16 – you'll never amount to anything... that really gave me the drive to succeed!

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