

MY STORY

WOMEN IN POWERED ACCESS

INGEBORG GABRIELS

SAFETY, HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT & QUALITY MANAGER AT RIWAL, NETHERLANDS

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 Safety, Health, Environment & Quality (SHEQ) Manager at Riwal Hoogwerkers.

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

As a child I was attracted to traditional male professions. But that was not really accepted at the time. Even my mother was afraid of reactions from people around us. I went into social work, caring for people with mental health needs. After my training, I started working with people on the streets of The Hague, and later in juvenile detention centres, but I missed working with technology. I took the step to leave social work behind and I went to a friend who knows a lot of people in tech and was given the opportunity to make a start in mechanical power transmission. I progressed from mechanic to workshop manager, but still had a desire to care for people. But how could I realise this? Almost four years ago, I was asked to apply for a job within the powered access business at Riwal. Of course, I couldn't say no to this! A little girl in the middle of big machines and tough men. I couldn't pass up the opportunity to work for Riwal.

What do you find inspiring about your role?

Every day I feel grateful to be able to practise this profession, ensuring everyone can return home safely at the end of the working day. Working at Riwal allows me to continue my dream of taking care of people and working in technology!

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

Where I am now is where I also see myself in five years. I think I have a great job and I am in the right position. In my previous job, I traveled a lot to a lot of countries. Now is the time to be in one country and be with the people around me. I want to be close to the people I work with.



What advice would you give to other women in/thinking of entering the industry?

I think the most important thing is that you know yourself well as a person. There is always someone who will try to bring you down and find your weakest point. But if you know your strengths and weaknesses very well, no-one out there can touch you. Be very self-assured. You have to be strong, but it's also good to show your weaknesses to the outside world instead of trying to hide them, because we all have them. So it's important to know yourself very well.

“Where I am now is where I also see myself in five years. I think I have a great job and that I am in the right position!”