

## Renee Watson

Renee is the founder and Head of Explosions at [The Curiosity Box](#), the first STEM subscription box in the UK, aimed at families of 4-11yr olds. Renee is on a mission to give 1 million children an awesome experience of STEM. Learn more about Renee: [Renee Watson profile](#).

My mission is to give 1 million children an awesome experience of STEM.

As a child, from a single parent family in rural Australia where sexism was ingrained in our culture, I didn't know anyone who had been to University and girls were expected to become hairdressers or pregnant (not that there is anything wrong with those, just that ambition beyond that was limited!). I was lucky enough to discover science very early, went on to study biochemistry and molecular biology, and have always been grateful for the opportunities that a career in STEM has provided. It has lifted me to achieve more than was ever expected of me and I want to give all children, the opportunity to find that spark of inspiration that overwhelms them with excitement and wonder about the world. I have been working towards this aim through STEM engagement, school workshops and outreach projects, for 18 years, and for 13 of those through my businesses WATS.ON and The Curiosity Box.

I started WATS.ON, shortly after having my first child to begin disrupting the way scientific societies run. Changing the focus from self-serving to charitable outreach with public engagement in STEM as a primary objective. My team and I have raised over £4 million for research charities across Europe. I grew the Oxfordshire Science Festival to 100 events and 30000 participants and have run science engagement activities in hundreds of schools, in some of the most underprivileged areas of the UK.

In 2016 I founded The Curiosity Box, the first STEM subscription box in the UK, aimed at families of 4-11yr olds and state primary schools. Since launch, The Curiosity Box has:

- \* given over 75000 children an awesome science experience
- \* Won the WISE Toy of the Year and the WOBA Innovation Award
  
- \* Launched STEM Day in a Box to make it easy for teachers to run a fun and engaging STEM day at school
  
- \* begun to export to the EU, South Korea, Romania and Australia
  
- \* and very excitingly 53% of our subscribers are girls without any need for pink or "for girls" labels.

I am an Enterprise Advisor, working with schools to improve careers provision and regularly speak in schools to help kids see the immense scope for a career in STEM. I am a mentor for OxFest and the numerous young female STEMists who intern with my business.

I represent Europe in the women's over 35s (aka the old ladies) Touch Rugby team.