

Applications Engineer

Riley Ilieva, National Instruments

I am an Applications Engineer, providing technical support to customers that use our products. This is similar to research: when we encounter a problem, we build a picture of the possible causes and how it can be solved. At NI, we interact widely with colleagues, even outside engineering, to find the best solution. We then document the solution so it's available for others who may face the same problem.

Before this I undertook a PhD in nuclear physics. While I enjoyed research, I felt I had much to learn from a technical perspective. I chose to apply for graduate schemes that would help me work on these skills. National Instruments' Engineering Leadership Programme (NI, ELP) was particularly attractive as it provided such comprehensive training (> 4 weeks!).

The ELP is unique in the skills it develops as the company's products are very varied and can be used in a number of different fields. During training, we were taught about the main platforms and equipment NI provides, plus problem solving and communication skills.

"My advice is to take full advantage of everything at your disposal. This doesn't mean that you necessarily want to do any of the jobs that you hear about but it will help to guide you to a job that you do enjoy and can develop in."

